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Where there's smoke...



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A star is born



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PM to publish US Wye letters on Sunday

By DANNA HARMAN

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu intends to make public on Sunday a number of American letters which should serve as strong evidence that Israel made a good deal at Wye Plantation, sources in the Prime Minister's Office said yesterday.

The letters, which are said to be very specific, pertain to six vital issues, including the US objection to a Palestinian declaration of independence on May 4, 1999; Israel's right to decide on the scope of the third redeployment; the expected reduction of the Palestinian Police force; and the expectation that the PA will confiscate weapons. All these matters are alluded to in the Wye Memorandum, but none are spelled out directly.

"The Americans had promised the Palestinians that the original US initiative would not be changed drastically - and that is why it is so vague," one source said. "The real details are in these letters, and the achievements reached by the Israeli negotiating team will become clear when the ministers see them."

A top Palestinian official said that the Palestinians also had received letters from the Americans, one of which reiterates the American stance on settlement building; the other promises the rapid commencement of the final-status talks.

A top Israeli official, however, said the Palestinians had received no such letters.

Target shows Hamas is desperate

ANALYSIS
By ABRAHAM SHULMAN

Blowing up a bus full of schoolchildren is the ultimate target for Hamas, since it would elicit the strongest reaction, but yesterday's suicide bombing also represented an act of desperation.

Until yesterday, Hamas had refrained from striking from Palestinian-controlled territory in order not to clash directly with the Palestinian Authority. But following the Wye agreement, it apparently realizes that a severe crackdown is on the way and it has nothing to lose.

"Everything that it can do, it will do. This is part of its plan to stop the peace," former deputy chief of general staff Matan Vilnai said. But he doesn't believe Hamas has embarked on a new strategy of targeting children.

There is nothing logical about it. They are attacking settlers and in this case, hit the army, which is their No. 1 enemy," Vilnai said.

There was nothing against the children specifically. This attack means they are not giving up. This is part of their struggle.

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SHABBAT	BEGINS	ENDS
Jerusalem	4:15 p.m.	5:28 p.m.
Tel Aviv	4:34 p.m.	5:30 p.m.
Haifa	4:25 p.m.	5:28 p.m.
Beer Sheva	4:32 p.m.	5:29 p.m.
Eilat	4:34 p.m.	5:32 p.m.

PA puts Yassin under house arrest



An Israeli forensic team examines the wreckage of the car bomb that destroyed an IDF jeep, killing Sgt. Alexei Nikov, when it blocked it from reaching a school bus near Kfar Darom yesterday.

IDF soldier killed in Gush Katif attack

By DANNA HARMAN and MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

In an unprecedented move, the Palestinian Authority placed Hamas spiritual leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin under house arrest yesterday, after his organization claimed responsibility for the Gush Katif bombing.

The arrest came after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat following the attack, telling him he must wage an all-out war on terrorism if he wants Israel to begin the redeployment as scheduled.

Arafat, in turn, vowed to track down the masterminds of the bombings and "try them for deliberately harming the Palestinians' national interests."

Arafat then immediately convened a meeting with the heads of security at his Gaza office and gave Gaza Preventive Security chief Mohammed Dahlan the green light to crack down on Hamas activists.

As part of the crackdown on Hamas, Arafat also ordered the arrest of dozens of Hamas activists, including Mahmoud Zahar, and Ismail Hanieh Ahmed Bahar and Mahmoud Zahar. In addition, Palestinian policemen conducted wide searches yesterday in Gaza and spot-checked automobiles at roadblocks.

Palestinian policemen set up roadblocks around Yassin's home, motorists were stopped and questioned, and reporters were asked to leave the vicinity.

Yassin, interviewed by Channel 1, said, "The operation today was against soldiers, not children... Soldiers were hurt, not children."

In a telephone interview with Qatari Jazeera satellite television, Yassin denounced the decision to place him under house arrest as "incorrect and unsound."

"This is in the service of Zionism, Israel, and Israeli presence," Yassin said in the interview monitored by the BBC. "Where are the human rights and freedom of expression?"

Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon said in a statement that it had been proved "beyond a shadow of a doubt" that the intended target of the attack was a bus containing schoolchildren.

Sharon demanded that the



Sgt. Alexei Nikov (IDF Spokesman)

Mohammed Deif wanted for bombing

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

Palestinian security officials are reportedly searching for Hamas fugitive Mohammed Deif, who is suspected of planning yesterday's car bombing that killed Sgt. Alexei Nikov.

The blast occurred near the Gush Katif junction shortly after 7 a.m. A suicide bomber driving a car packed with dozens of kilograms of explosives attempted to ram a school bus, but was blocked by an IDF jeep.

The car detonated next to the jeep, killing Nikov. An IDF reservist was seriously wounded and a second soldier suffered light-to-medium wounds.

None of the 34 schoolchildren in the bus was injured, except for a few minor scrapes. The bus was damaged, some of its windows were blown out and the front dented and blackened from smoke.

After the explosion, troops dispersed three Palestinians fleeing, began a hot pursuit, and opened fire when the Palestinians ignored calls to halt, army sources said. One of the Palestinians was wounded. Palestinian policemen who saw the chase fired at the troops, who were ordered not to return fire.

The IDF Spokesman said the District Coordinating Office immediately intervened and the incident was concluded. None of the IDF troops were injured and the wounded Palestinian was taken by Palestinian security officials for treatment, the spokesman said.

The IDF believes the three had signalled to the bomber, believed to be Mohammed Abdullah, of Khan Yunis, a member of Hamas's military wing, when the convoy turned in from the junction.

Deif has been hiding in the Gaza Strip for some time and Israeli officials believe he may have planned the attack as a "welcome gift" for Arafat following his return after signing the Wye Memorandum.

Deif is considered by Israel to be Hamas fugitive No. 1 and was the assistant of Yehiya Ayyash, the "Engineer." He is wanted for the murder of soldier Sharon Edri and a number of terror attacks.

An anonymous caller contacted Israel Radio yesterday and claimed Hamas was responsible for the attack. He said it was directed at settlers in Gaza and the West Bank.

Officials believe Abdullah waited for the convoy and as it turned at the Gush Katif junction, he drove from the opposite direction towards the busload of children. The bus was accompanied by two IDF jeeps at each end and a minibus.

Abdullah was blocked by the jeep, crashed into it, and detonated his bomb. From the force of the blast, the jeep overturned in the air, was blown some 100 meters, and burst into flames.

The wounded soldiers were helicoptered to Soroka Hospital in Beersheba.

Immanuel Katz, deputy director of the hospital, said one soldier suffered a broken hip and leg and a ruptured spleen. The soldier underwent surgery and doctors said his condition was serious but stable.

The second soldier suffered broken bones in his legs and additional wounds.

The third casualty, Gadi Biton, a resident of Kfar Darom, was riding in the bus with the children and was cut on the head by shrapnel. He was treated at the site and returned home.

Minutes after the blast, the IDF imposed a closure on the entire Gaza Strip and closed off the main route from Kfar Darom to the junction. Troops and police searched the area for additional bombs.

IDF officials and members of the Palestinian security services met at the site.

Palestinian General Intelligence chief Amin Hindi told reporters that the attack was an attempt to prevent the agreement reached at Wye from being implemented.

OC Southern Command Maj. Gen. Yom-Tov Samia said the Palestinians were cooperating fully. He praised the actions of the IDF soldiers in the jeep.

A representative of the CIA also arrived in the afternoon and began taking notes on the incident.

Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Shaul Mofaz and Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai inspected the scene, then visited the children at the school. Mordechai said he had met with the Palestinian security officials and they had promised to act immediately.

Mordechai said Israel would monitor the PA's response closely. "The basis for progress in the peace process depends on the actions taken by the PA against terror. If this is done, we will make progress," he said.



Astronaut John Glenn waves as he departs crew quarters for the launching pad at the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida, yesterday.

John Glenn, 77, returns to space

By PAUL REGER

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida (AP) - John Glenn rocketed back into orbit yesterday on a mission of science and sentiment, returning as the world's oldest astronaut to the high frontier he pioneered for America 36 years ago.

"Let the wings of Discovery lift us on to the future," said launch control in its final words to the seven-member crew before liftoff.

"Liftoff of Discovery with a crew of six astronaut heroes and one American legend," added launch commentator Lisa Malone.

Discovery rose majestically from its seaside launch pad, riding the roaring flame of its five rocket engines through a cloudless blue sky. The craft quickly gained speed, arced toward the east, and slowly faded from view, gaining orbit 8 1/2 minutes after liftoff.

Glenn's journey began 19 minutes late - a lot better than his first trip to orbit in 1962, when he had to endure 10 postponements over two months.

The countdown had proceeded flawlessly until about 10 minutes before the scheduled 2 p.m. launch, when an alarm sounded inside

Discovery's cockpit, triggering a nine-minute delay. Shortly after the count resumed, it had to be held again briefly when a plane intruded into the restricted area.

Glenn, 77, was the first American in orbit in 1962, on the third US manned mission. He returned to space on the US's 123rd manned mission.

"It's a great day for America and a great day for our senior citizens," President Bill Clinton said as he arrived at the Cape to view the launch.

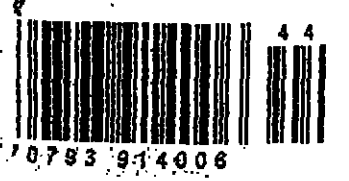
Besides Clinton and his wife, Hillary, many members of Congress and some Hollywood celebrities were on hand at the Kennedy Space Center area for a fleeting glimpse of history roaring into space.

Veteran observers said the launch frenzy rivaled that of missions to the moon and far exceeded most recent shuttle flights.

Even though he is a US senator and an American space hero, Glenn returned to space as the lowest-ranking of Discovery's crew. The other crew members are Curtis L. Brown, the commander; Steven W. Lindsey, pilot; Mission Specialist Stephen K. Robinson, Scott E. Parazynski, and Pedro Duque; and Payload Specialist 1 Chiaki Mukai.

Duque will be the first Spaniard in space. He's also the only space rookie and the baby of the crew: At 35, he wasn't even born when Glenn first flew. He will help with Discovery's science experiments.

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NEWS

in brief

Jordanian orphans pray for king's recovery

More than 250 orphans opened their hands in prayer under a cloud of dust in the desert. The ritual is usually performed to beseech God for rain. But this prayer ceremony at a desert town 50 km. south of Amman had a different purpose.

"It's a special prayer to implore God for the recovery of King Hussein and his speedy return home," organizer Abdul-Razzak Abu-Feilat said yesterday.

Hussein, 63, has been receiving treatment for cancer at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, since July. AP

Katsav wants speedier tourist visas

Tourism Minister Moshe Katsav has asked Interior Minister Eli Suissa to find a speedy solution to the delay in issuing entry visas to tourists.

Due to sanctions by Interior Ministry staffers, there has been a slowdown in processing applications for entry visas, including those of many groups interested in visiting. Such groups, said Katsav, have had to either postpone or cancel their visits. The cancellations will cause grievous harm to the tourist industry and to agents who organize group tours, he said. Suissa has promised to try to resolve the problem, but has not spelled out how he intends to do this under existing circumstances. *Greer Fay Cashman*

IDF comes under fire in Nablus

Gunshots were fired yesterday at IDF soldiers on the eastern outskirts of Nablus during a demonstration by Palestinians who were throwing stones at the troops. There were no reported casualties. One of the soldiers said that he saw a Palestinian pull out a pistol and fire at an IDF jeep. The soldiers responded by firing live ammunition into the air and at the ground. A bullet casing was found during searches. *Itim*

Zalmout murder suspect identified

The police and General Security Service are conducting a nationwide search for Gur Hemel, 28, a Braslav Hassid, who is suspected of murdering Mohammed Zalmout, 68, near Ramat on Monday. Police have reportedly distributed photos of Hemel at border crossings and the airport, fearing he may attempt to flee the country. Police have not ruled out the possibility that Hemel acted in revenge for the October 13 terrorist murder of Itamar Doron, also a Braslav Hassid, at Moshav Ora. *Margot Dudkevitch*

Rubinstein warns against incitement

Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein and State Attorney Edna Arbel said yesterday that during the last week there has been a rise in the number of cases of incitement.

Rubinstein called on demonstrators and public figures to express their protests in a manner in which there is no potential for encouraging violence. He added that the State Attorney's Office will pursue every case of a demonstration that includes encouragement of violent protest. *Itim*

Student guilty of assisting in counselor's murder

A 17-year-old was found guilty yesterday of helping her 18-year-old boyfriend murder their dorm counselor at the boarding school in Nahalal Yehuda in January. She advised her boyfriend on how to inflict a fatal injury on Tomer Hirsch, 25, and helped him clean up bloodstains after he stabbed Hirsch to death, Tel Aviv District Court ruled. Her boyfriend got 20 years for the murder. *Itim*

Ministers call to delay vote on Wye

By LIAT COLLINS

Several ministers reacted to news of the Kfar Darom attack by demanding the vote in the cabinet on ratifying the Wye Memorandum be postponed.

Health Minister Yehoshua Matza said the government's signing should be conditioned on the implementation of the Palestinian Authority's security commitments. He said PA Chairman Yasser Arafat should immediately impose a curfew and closure on the area and arrest Hamas activists in Gaza to prove his commitment to the agreement.

Matza said he had asked Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to postpone the cabinet vote on the agreement until the

Palestinians had fulfilled their promises, although he said the discussion of the agreement could start.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai said Israel would continue to move ahead with the peace process, but at every stage would examine whether the Palestinians are making strenuous efforts to combat terrorism.

Environment and Agriculture Minister Rafael Eitan said the government must insist on the Palestinians pursuing the terrorists who carried out the attack. He said the implementation of the Wye agreement should be postponed until it is clear that the PA can fight terror.

"The big success of the agreement blew up in our faces," Eitan said. "The ink on the agreement has not yet dried and already

we're being made fools of at a bloody price. It would be better to pull ourselves together before there are more victims."

Tourism Minister Moshe Katsav said, "This is the test for Arafat in which he needs to show leadership and responsibility and prove that he can be a serious partner in the negotiations for peace."

Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon described the attack aimed at a schoolbus as "serious." He also repeated Israel's insistence that the PA act against terrorists and the terror infrastructure as the agreement requires.

Transport Minister Shaul Yahalom praised the IDF soldiers for preventing a worse disaster and said it showed the importance of placing security issues at the top of the agenda.

Yahalom also called for postponing the ratification of the agreement.

"While Netanyahu is busy giving territories to the Palestinians, they are giving us explosives in Gush Katif," Moledet leader Rehavam Ze'evi said. "Maybe this will open his eyes and stop the defeatist process of concessions."

MK Ran Cohen (Meretz), a member of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, said that "it was not a miracle that saved the children on the schoolbus, but IDF soldiers who protected them with their own bodies. We in the opposition won't act indecently like Netanyahu did and won't blame him by saying the murder is the result of the Wye agreement as he consistently blamed [Yitzhak] Rabin after every attack."

Soldier Nikov was the family vanguard

Sgt. Alexei Nikov, 19, of Haifa, who was killed in yesterday's suicide bombing in the Gaza Strip, came to Israel on his own from his native Kharkov in Ukraine two years ago, as part of the Jewish Agency's Na'aleh program. His parents, Larisa and Simon, and younger brother, Radik, followed him here some 18 months ago.

He spent his first five months in the country studying at Sha'ar Hanegev, then enrolled in a preparatory course for study at the Technion, where he intended to study after his army service.

Reacting to his death, Absorption Minister Yuli Edelstein said: "There

are no words in the world that can comfort parents who came in the footsteps of their children to an unknown land - despite knowing they would face daily hardships they would have to deal with, and arriving with the willingness to do so - their only hope being their sons."

Edelstein added: "Our partners to the [Wye] agreement must prove to us that they are doing all they can to block and prevent attacks against us, attacks that come from the areas under the full control of the Palestinian Authority."

Nikov is to be buried today at 12:30 at the Haifa Military Cemetery. *(Itim)*

Public Defender's Office extends services to youth

Minors charged with a crime and suspects awaiting remand hearings will be eligible for free legal assistance from the Public Defender's Office starting Sunday. The change, which Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi authorized recently, is expected to have serious repercussions in juvenile courts and at remand hearings, where the majority of suspects have not been represented by - or even consulted with - lawyers.

Approximately 80 percent of suspects at remand hearings in the central region and 70% of 13-18-year-olds facing criminal charges in Tel Aviv Juvenile Court, the country's largest, were not being represented by a qualified lawyer. Figures are similar at courts around the country. Suspects who do not have lawyers often end up with harsher sentences than those who receive help in navigating their way through the justice system. The chief public defender, Prof. Kenneth Mann, said last month that his office and the police force had cooperated to establish the new rules and that they are currently being brought to the attention of police stations. *(Itim)*

Winning numbers

In yesterday's Payis Hazak drawing, ticket number 011568 won NIS 1.5 million, while ticket number 344433 won the car. Tickets 276940, 587910, 722849, 830917, 326327, 699229, 369231 and 839069 won NIS 5,000. Tickets ending in 74265, 48672, 10863, 18145, 79899, 15897, 99722, 27613, 94349, 69165, 27732, 96820, 92810, 92464, 43078, 09815, 46468, 79943 and 08813 won NIS 1,000. Tickets ending in 617, 021, 164 and 908 won NIS 100. Tickets ending in 00, 69, 40 and 97 won NIS 50. Tickets ending in 43 and 71 won NIS 20. Tickets ending in 5 and 1 won NIS 10.



Can we talk?

Some 10,000 people across the country participated yesterday in a National Day of Dialogue on religious-secular relations, sponsored by the Gesher organization to mark the third anniversary of the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin. Posing in Tel Aviv under a banner reading "Come, let's start talking," are (from left) Sharon Hayoun from Tel Aviv, Rivka Ben-Shahar of Alon Shvut, Amal Ibrahim Badas of Jatt, and Adi Haritz of Tel Aviv. *(Yael Sonekh/Israel Sun)*

Clinton sure cabinet will vote on Wye soon

By HILLET KUTTLER

WASHINGTON - US President Bill Clinton yesterday expressed confidence that the cabinet vote ratifying the Wye accord will take place soon, with the deal's implementation following soon thereafter as scheduled.

Clinton attributed the delay to

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's reading of his own political opposition.

Netanyahu "wants to be absolutely assured that the early steps will be taken on the other side. I believe that if we complete the security arrangements that were agreed to at Wye, that the Israeli government will approve this and honor their commitment and we'll go forward," Clinton told reporters at a news conference late Wednesday afternoon with visiting Colombian President Andres Pastrana.

Clinton commented that at Wye, Netanyahu did a "remarkable job being strong, aggressive in defense of Israel's interests."

Clinton echoed the administration's recent pronouncements that the cabinet delay is not a setback at all and was to be expected.

"So I would urge all the

onlookers here, including all of us in the press and in public life, not to overreact to every little bump and turn in the road," he said. "There was a lot of mistrust built up in this relationship; it wasn't going to evaporate even in nine days. And a lot of the people who weren't there at Wye are going to be heard from in both camps now."

"I think the important thing is they all made commitments to do certain things on a certain timetable, and no one should slip off of that. And it was pretty well synchronized so that there will be continual reaffirmations on both sides of the commitments made. And if we can just stay on that, I think we will be fine."

In a briefing for foreign journalists, deputy Middle East coordinator Aaron Miller said the US has "no reason to believe" that the cabinet and then the Knesset will not ratify the agreement.

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When 15 minutes feel like an eternity

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

Once the residents of Kfar Darom recognized the sound of the explosion, their first concern was for the elementary schoolchildren who had already left on their daily 25-minute bus ride to school in Atzmona.

It took some 15 minutes until they received the reassuring news that the children were alright, and that aside from shock and a few cuts and bruises, they were unharmed.

Parents could not reach their children quickly to comfort them because the IDF had closed the road outside the settlement.

Three of Ophir Cohen's children were on the bus. "They were the longest 15 minutes in my life," Cohen, chairman of the community's secretariat, said.

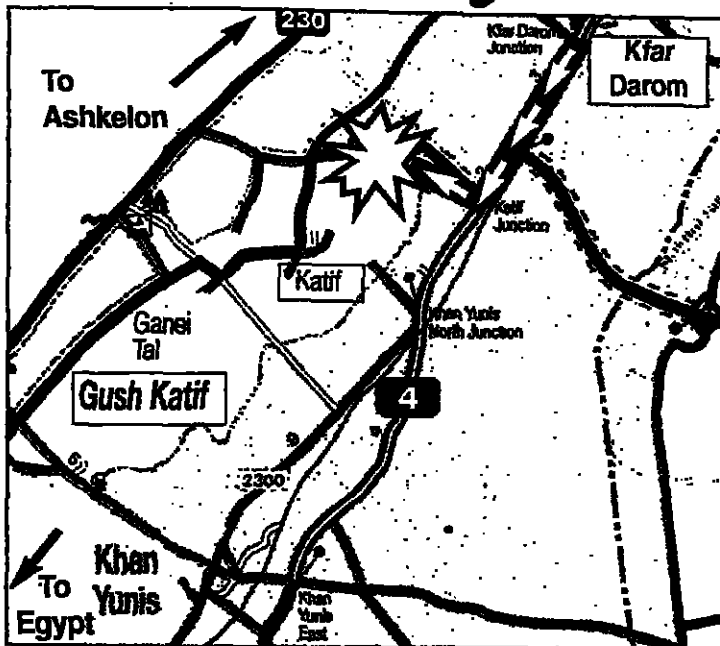
He said that the parents spoke with their children on the telephone as others contacted security officials to receive an update. Due to the closure, the children only returned in the early afternoon.

"They asked lots of questions - what happened to the soldiers, why did someone want to attack them - but they weren't hysterical," he said.

Shela Shorshan declared it was a miracle that none of the children had been injured. She said her children were at home, but were concerned for their friends.

"The fact that our buses are bullet-proof and protected has proven itself. I shudder to think what would have been the outcome if they weren't," she said.

The community had nothing but praise for the soldiers whose courageous action saved the lives of their children. However, residents said



ever since the Oslo Agreement they had warned that the route used by both Israelis and Palestinians is dangerous. "There is no other route for us to use," one said. "The Palestinians build along the roadside and there are many side roads that lead off the main road."

Asher Mifsi said that anyone familiar with the situation realizes that the capability of the terrorists is increasing. Everything, he said, depends on the Palestinian Police and the Palestinian Authority. If they want to, they can prevent terrorists attacks.

"It is obviously not in their inter-

est," he said, adding, "It takes more than one person to prepare a car bomb."

Yosef Ben-Aharon, a former director-general of the Prime Minister's Office, told Israel Radio that four of his grandchildren were travelling in the bus. He immediately spoke with his daughter and was reassured that they were safe.

He blamed Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, declaring that instead of using restraint the IDF should respond in a more forceful manner. Such actions, he said, will deter the Palestinians from carrying out attacks.

There is a certain amount of criticism of the Wye agreement, with many saying it is vague and leaves vital details unresolved.

The agreement is a summary, a blueprint. We have had so many discussions (with the Palestinians) by now that we all know what is meant. There are some details that the parties know about which go beyond what has been codified, and there are many things that have been said verbally. The alternative would have been to produce an encyclopedia of 1,000 pages which would go into each minute detail. This was not deemed necessary by the Americans, or by us.

The agreement assumes good faith, and certainly there is good faith on Israel's side in wanting to implement. If good intentions are there on the Palestinian side...then it suffices. If, on the other hand, people want to avoid or not do things, then no matter how detailed it would have been, it would not have worked.

Some might say that the goodwill of this government is at question.

This criticism is misplaced. There is skepticism, because for a very long time there was an insufficient degree of adherence by the Palestinians to their old commitments and that introduced a natural sense of skepticism, but that can be overcome by a demonstration of seriousness of purpose on their part.

How will terror attacks effect the implementation of the Wye agreement?

The terror attack yesterday only reaffirms our insistence on full and rigorous implementation of the security measures and commitments that the Palestinians

are obligated to do. This is an imperative and there is great urgency that it be done. We are waiting for the efforts to be made - and there is an obvious relationship between effort and results obtained. You never reach perfection, but this does not mean you don't apply the full effort.

NEWSLINE

with UZI ARAD

Evidently the Palestinians have not done enough, and they should now move without delay because otherwise we will see more loss of lives and this can rock the whole process. They are obligated in a contractual way, and besides it is the only way to maintain the peace process.

How do you see the role of the CIA in the implementation planning?

We expect the CIA to perform in the best standards of professionalism that the CIA is capable of, and we know the CIA to be the best there is, as an organization, and the US to be the country that upholds the principles that we would all like to see carried out in the coming months.

How do you see this agreement affecting our relationship with our Arab neighbors?

Some say that there are Arab countries who have stalled on normalization or on the reactivation of the multilateral tracts because of impasse in Palestinian-Israeli negotiations. But if that was justified - which I don't think it was - at the moment of impasse, certainly it stands to reason that there should be a change in attitude now.

Arad is Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's special Foreign Affairs advisor.

YASSIN

Continued from Page 1

PA Justice Minister Freih Abu Meidan said all the necessary procedures would be taken against those who are linked to the organizations.

Meidan stressed it is hard to prevent a suicide bomber from carrying out an attack and heralded the importance of continued cooperation with Israel.

Sufian Abu Zaid, head of the PA's Department for Israeli Affairs, declared that the PA could not know the intentions of every terrorist who plans to carry out a suicide attack, despite the PA's efforts to prevent such attacks.

Mahmoud Abbas telephoned Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai last night to express regret about the bombing and Sgt. Alexei Nikov's death.

Mordechai demanded that the PA quickly find and arrest those responsible for the attack and fight continuously and comprehensively against terror and its base, the Defense Ministry said.

Abbas said he hopes the security cooperation agreed upon at Wye Plantation will bear fruit and stressed the Palestinian desire for the peace process to progress and lead to better security, the Defense Ministry said.

The defense establishment is not planning on taking any further steps and does not intend to reimpose the closure on the Gaza Strip for the time being.

"Putting Sheikh Yassin under house arrest is a declaration of intent that they will not allow things to get out of control," said Anat Kurtz, an expert on the Hamas at Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies. "It tells Israel and the United States and the world that the PA is taking matters seriously."

State Department spokesman James Foley said yesterday that "if it is true, the reports about the house arrest, that would illustrate the seriousness with which they're dealing with this matter."

Mohammed Najib, Arieh O'Sullivan, and Hillel Kuttler contributed to this report.

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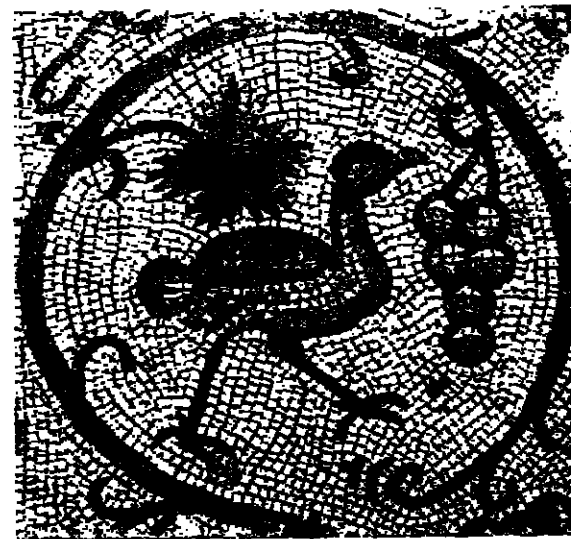
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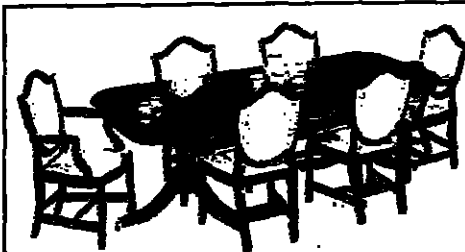
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Survey: 61.3% say nothing learned after Rabin

By SHI DAVID

As the nation prepares to mourn on the third anniversary of Yitzhak Rabin's assassination on Sunday, 61.3 percent of Israelis don't think any lessons have been learned from his murder, according to a survey released yesterday.

The survey, commissioned by Geshet to promote understanding between the religious and secular populations, found that 67% of secular people, 56% of the traditional population, and 50% of the religious community thought that nothing had been learned.

Conducted by Modi'in Ezrahi, the poll of a sample of 500 people also found that 55% of secular people interviewed believe the assassination of another politician is possible, compared to 37% of the traditional community and 29% of the religious community.

Meanwhile, preparations across the country continued for Sunday's official anniversary of Rabin's murder on the Hebrew date of 12 Marheshvan.

This is the second year a law covering special memorial events for Rabin will be in effect. Flags will be lowered to half mast in state institutions and military bases, the Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Shaul Mofaz will publish a special order of the day on the subject. Schools will hold activities dedicated to the theme of democracy and the threat of violence in society.

Commemorations will begin tomorrow night at 6 p.m., as the Labor Party will

open to the public Rabin's restored workroom at its Tel Aviv headquarters on 110 Rehov Hayarkon. A photograph exhibit entitled "Landmarks on Yitzhak Rabin's Way" and a children's drawing exhibition about Rabin's murder and his vision of peace will be displayed.

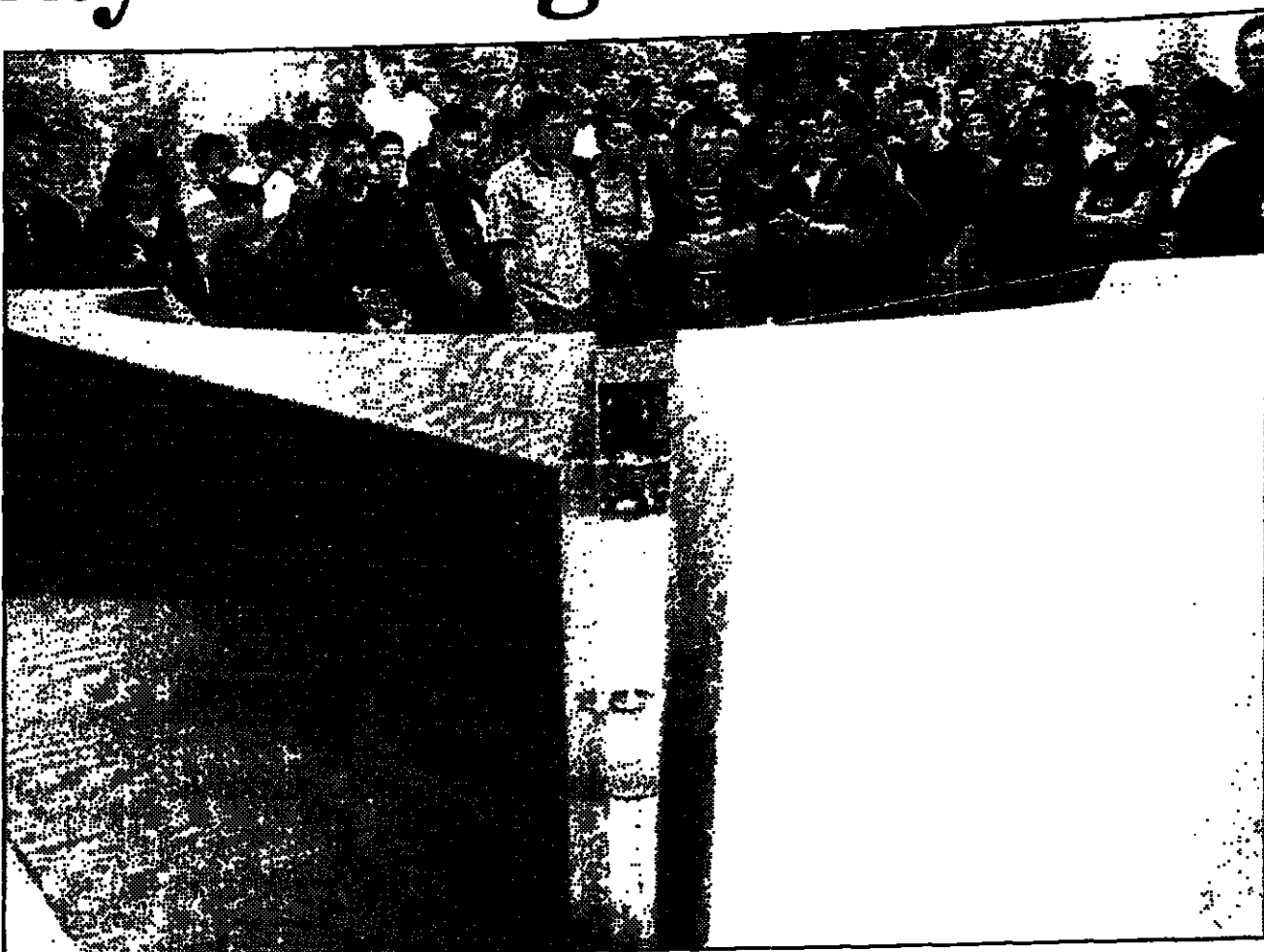
Thousands of memorial candles will be placed at the entrance to the building for the public, and visitors will also be able to sign a visitors' book. Leah Rabin, family members, and public figures will inaugurate the workroom.

From there, thousands of Labor's Young Guard will march to Rabin Square, where Leah Rabin, party leader Ehud Barak, Meretz leader Yossi Sarid, Tel Aviv Mayor Ronni Milo, Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, and Geshet leader David Levy will address the rally.

The state memorial for Rabin will be at graveside on Mount Herzl, starting at 3 p.m. Sunday. It will be attended by the Rabin family, President Ezer Weizman, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon, Supreme Court President Aharon Barak, MKs, diplomats, and other invited guests.

A memorial torch will be lit by Rabin's grandchildren - Michael, Noa Ben-Artzi-Pelosoff, and Yonatan Ben-Artzi. After former chief of general staff Amnon Lipkin-Shahak and a family representative make speeches, IDF Chief Chaplain Gad Navon will recite psalms and Rabin's son Yuval will say Kaddish.

The service will be broadcast live on Channels 1 and 2.



Schoolchildren gather round Yitzhak Rabin's grave at Mount Herzl in Jerusalem yesterday.

(Flash 90)

Before the ceremony, a special memorial candle will be lit by Weizman at his home, in front of the Rabin family and other invited guests.

Special letters remembering Rabin have been written by Jordan's King Hussein and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat and will be read at the gathering. Leah Rabin and Weizman will also address the gathering.

At the Jerusalem Theater, the Central Youth Memorial Assembly for Yitzhak Rabin and Education Minister Rabbi Yitzhak Levy will conduct a memorial starting at 11 a.m., which will be broadcast live on Educational Television.

A memorial at the Hebrew University's Mt. Scopus campus, will begin at noon and will feature a speech by Shahak.

There are also several events tomorrow night. Starting at 9 p.m., a memorial tent will be set up beside Mt. Herzl by various student groups. Leah and Yuval Rabin will make speeches as will several prominent rabbis and professors. Events will continue through Sunday.

The Yitzhak Rabin Center for Israel Studies will also open a tent on Mt. Herzl for prayer and study. Both secular and religious people are invited.

In Haspin, a religious community, the Golan Regional Council will start a memorial service in the Sports Auditorium at 8:15 p.m., which will include a symposium called "Life and Actions in the Shadow of Division."

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Students want negotiations by Sunday

By ARYEH DEAN COHEN

Student leaders significantly reduced the scope of their strike activities yesterday following the terrorist attack in Gush Katif. The students said they would give the Treasury until Sunday to enter into serious negotiations with them. One student was arrested yesterday at a protest outside the Mifal Hapayis building in Tel Aviv in the morning when he tried to enter Finance Minister Yaskov Neeman's car as the minister left a meeting of the Knesset Finance Committee with the Union of Local Authorities in Israel. After the meeting ended, Neeman emerged, said "Shabbat shalom" to the waiting students, and then walked to his car. The student attempted to enter and was arrested. A National Union of Israeli Students spokesman said, "Neeman had promised he would meet with the students after the meeting, he added. Meanwhile, the chairman of the Association of Hebrew Authors in Israel, Dr. Orizim Bartana wrote a letter to Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani saying the organization protested the brutal treatment of the students by the police. "We again state our complete support for all the students' demands," the letter said. Him contributed to this report



A double century

Rachel and Yehuda Ozeri are two of the more than 40 centenarians honored yesterday at JDC-Eshel's 'Jubilee of Jubilees' for their contribution to helping build the State of Israel. In addition to celebrating the country's jubilee, the event also marks the approaching International Year of the Elderly.

Ofra weighs Falash Mura program after rape

By ARYEH DEAN COHEN

Ofra leaders are to meet next week to discuss the future of their absorption program for Falash Mura, after one of the new immigrants raped a student at the settlement earlier this week. The young woman, 18, a student in another program at Ofra, was also stabbed by the drunken 16-year-old who attacked her, and was hospitalized with a thigh wound. "They feel very guilty about what happened," said Yitzhak Meir, chairman of the Ofra secretariat. Meir added that "there are some people who are saying that maybe it was a mistake to take these people in, and as a result of what happened their number has increased." At Ofra, the roughly 45 Falash Mura families study in a conver-

sion program and ulpan, and live alongside several other Ethiopian immigrants who have been absorbed at the settlement. However, Meir said that the space allotted for the absorption of the immigrants at Ofra is problematic, because space is at a premium. He said the housing for the girls at the Shuva Institute, in which the victims participated, is very close to the housing provided for the immigrants. Sunday night, he said, the girls' assailant got drunk and snuck into another girl's room while she was out, but was scared off when she returned. He then broke into the other girls' room, tied one of them up and raped the other before stabbing her. He was caught the following morning and turned over to police. Meir said that the young man

would not be allowed to return to the settlement if he is released by police prior to trial. The incident has led to considerable soul-searching among Ofra's residents regarding their ongoing willingness to participate in experimental programs to absorb new immigrants, Meir said. "The matter is still too fresh in our memories, although there are some people who say we've done our thing, that's enough. But that's not really pragmatic, and most people know that these people are going to have to be here for the duration of their absorption process, which is 18 months," he said. "There are different opinions," Meir said. "But we can't sweep the problems under the rug. This is a community which has always found subjects it believes are

important to support. This program has never had complete support. From the beginning there were some people who complained about the decision-making and the absorption, but we agreed to do it." Shlomo Mula, the Absorption Ministry's coordinator for the Ethiopian immigrants, called the idea that anyone at Ofra could think of closing down the program "shameful." "What, because of one incident you're going to close down the whole program and stain the whole community? The same thing could happen in Ramat Aviv Gimmel," he said. Mula added that Ofra had been given all the necessary assistance in absorbing the immigrants, and that the situation there is better than at other sites housing Falash Mura.

Supreme Court voids Moledet-Gesher list

News agencies

The High Court yesterday disqualified the Moledet-Gesher list for the local elections in Upper Nazareth because of incitement to racism by its candidate for mayor, Ze'ev Hartman. The three-justice panel, President Aharon Barak, Theodor Orr, and Michael Cheshin, announced that they would give the causes for their decision at a future date. Meanwhile, the head of the central elections committee, Justice Eliahu Matza rejected a request to outlaw the Likud list in Carmiel on the grounds that its head had made racist pronouncements. Matza explained that the appeal

was filed after the deadline. In the Upper Nazareth case, Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein petitioned the court about Matza's decision of the chairman of the Central Elections Committee not to disqualify the Moledet-Gesher list. During the appeal, Uzi Fogelman, of the State Attorney's Office, claimed that the placement of Hartman at the top of the list showed that the list as a whole agreed with his racist positions. Fogelman added that the first declaration in Hartman's platform is "we will stop the Arab takeover of Upper Nazareth." The Moledet-Gesher list claimed that the racist segment of

Hartman's platform had been deleted and that they had joined the list in order to advance social causes, not to support racist viewpoints. In Jerusalem, the High Court dismissed a petition by a list for the handicapped against the Jerusalem Municipality on grounds that it did not offer handicapped facilities in most of the polling stations. The reasons are to be delineated at a later date. Two Agudat Yisrael campaign workers were arrested in Jerusalem Wednesday night after they attacked a car that was carrying Shas campaign workers with tear gas. The car's windshield was shattered, police said.

Canada denies involvement in Mashaal hit

By SHI DAVID

The Canadian Security Intelligence Service knew nothing of the Mossad's attempt to kill Hamas political leader Khaled Mashaal in Amman last year, according to a report released Wednesday in Ottawa. A review committee that periodically audits CSIS operations investigated the September 1997 incident, in which two Mossad agents entered Jordan using Canadian passports and then tried to kill Mashaal by injecting him with a lethal poison. The committee said there was no evidence of CSIS cooperation with the Mossad. "The committee examined all the facts and they found no evidence of CSIS involvement in the Mashaal incident and no evi-

dence of contact with Mossad agents before the incident and no evidence of the Mossad ever asking CSIS for passports or of CSIS giving the Mossad passports," said Manon Dumas, spokesperson for the Canadian Embassy in Tel Aviv. "What is paramount for the government is to prevent revelations about our activities in the region, such as the Mossad-CSIS meeting that took place on the eve of the assassination attempt," Dumas wrote. The committee confirmed that the passports the two Mossad agents used were forgeries. CSIS specialists also speculated that the Mossad had made large numbers of fake Canadian passports. The committee dismissed allegations that officials looked the

other way when Canadian passports were used by foreign agents. The incident deeply angered Jordan and Canada. To appease Jordan, Israel provided the antidote to save Mashaal's life and released several Palestinian prisoners, including Hamas spiritual leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin. David Levy, who was foreign minister at the time, said the Mossad would no longer use Canadian passports and apologized to Canada, after it recalled Ambassador David Berger. "Canada has clearly voiced its concerns and we have received assurances and we accept these assurances," Dumas said. "We are confident steps have been taken to protect the integrity of Canadian passports," Dumas added.

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Claims Conference Goodwill Fund Deadline Extended to December 31, 1998

Individuals who failed to register claims for restitution of Jewish property in the former East Germany by the December 31, 1992 German Government deadline may apply to the Claims Conference Goodwill Fund. The Claims Conference Goodwill Fund shares net proceeds from the recovery of properties which it obtained as the legal successor to unclaimed Jewish property. Applications to the Goodwill Fund will be accepted through December 31, 1998. Please write to the address below, indicating:

- The address of the property
- The name of the original property owner
- Your relationship to the original owner
- Your name and mailing address

Claims Conference Successor Organization Goodwill Fund
Sophienstrasse 26
60487 Frankfurt am Main, Germany

To aid applicants who do not have complete information, the Claims Conference is establishing a Department for Property Identification. If you believe that you or your relatives may have owned Jewish property in the former East Germany, please include as much information as possible in your application and the Department will endeavor to identify such property. Please write by December 31, 1998 to Mr. Peter Heuss, Department for Property Identification, at the above address. There will be no charge for this service.

Eyeing the beast

A British woman who was helping bring witnesses to Archbishop Desmond Tutu's Truth and Reconciliation Commission assured him that "everyone is working like ni... er, Trojans." Tutu told the anecdote with a characteristic chuckle at yesterday's public unveiling of the commission's harrowing report.

Column One



Thomas O'Dwyer

President Nelson Mandela, in a busy casual shirt, began his speech by relating how a nephew calls his dress style "disgraceful" and tells him a president should wear a suit, a white shirt, and a hat. As he symbolically handed over to Mandela the bulky five volumes of the 3,500-page report, Tutu pretended to buckle under the weight.

What was all this flippancy at a solemn public ceremony to publicize one of the worst catalogues of horror and human cruelty the world has seen in the last 50 years? This is Tutu, this is Mandela, this is South Africa. This is the new South Africa, where Christianity, humanism, rainbow races, and confusion live uneasily together.

Dark and light.

No black American politician would dare tell a public joke about white folks "working like ni... er..." The fact that an African archbishop could do it on such a sobering occasion says a lot for the maturity of African self-confidence. Seeing Mandela and Tutu together is often like watching children at play. Such unpretentious rapport and humor makes the African character so captivating to foreigners. But it is also what makes African cruelty and casual violence so horrifying.

The unheated touches of humor and flippancy yesterday could only shine a glaring light on the blood-soaked final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings. We all know how funny and utterly disarming Desmond Tutu can be, but few people will forget the other shocking image of the commission chairman, collapsed and sobbing into his arm as one of his witnesses recounted unspeakable tortures the apartheid police had inflicted.

And for most of yesterday's ceremony, Tutu was deadly serious. He said that with the release of the report, "we will have looked the beast in the eye, we will have come to terms with our horrendous past, and it will no longer hold us hostage."

Hostages of destiny. "Something terrible happened" is the first sentence of a recent book (*The House Gun*) by the literary conscience of South Africa, Nadine Gordimer. The sentence is repeated throughout the text, the "terrible thing" is the murder of a friend by a friend, the theme is the question "how could this have happened?" The book is a vignette of the nation: "We are all hostages

of our destiny," said Mandela yesterday.

The Truth Commission has attempted to supply the why, and the how, and the who, and the what-now answers to the terrible things. Tutu said it already has sent a message as far away as Northern

Ireland and Bosnia and Rwanda - that truth and reconciliation are the only tools left to start again. The report is controversial because it is uncompromising, but in its controversy the commission gained extraordinary home and international trust. At the last minute both the former rulers and the ANC, the current rulers, tried to have the report blocked because it sullies their self-images. "But those fighting to preserve their own integrity misjudged the determination of the Truth Commission," said Tutu. They certainly misjudged the determination of the affable archbishop with a backbone of steel.

In listing the worst crimes covered by the report, Tutu jumbled together without discrimination those of the apartheid regime and those of the ANC extremists who tortured and killed their own followers in their camps abroad.

Yet the report and the leaders made crystal clear that, while the ANC crimes were unacceptable misdeeds in a legitimate war for freedom, those of the white rulers were systematic crimes against humanity by an evil racist regime.

Blind mice. South Africa was a monstrous tyranny. Now it is a constitutional democracy. The former criminals must stop whining and be grateful that they have been offered a unique chance to tell the truth and seek amnesty with dignity.

The report throws up three prime villains still locked in arrogant denial and, most interestingly, one is from the white right, one from the ANC, and one typical of the sort of African leader most common in Africa. They are P.W. Botha, Winnie Mandela, and Zulu Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

Like characters from a Gordimer novel, they symbolize the dangers South Africa must recognize and neutralize - white extremism, black extremism, and tribal extremism. This is a report that has the chance to become a monument to truth rather than a dust gatherer. It is certainly a monument to Desmond Tutu. "Let the waters of healing flow from Pretoria today as they flowed from the altar in Ezekiel's vision," he said. "Let them flow to cleanse out the land and to cleanse its people."

"We, who are the rainbow people of God, in looking at our past we will commit ourselves: Never again! [in English] Never again! [in Afrikaans] Never again! [in Xhosa] Never again! [in Zulu]."

UN Security Council decides to maintain Libya sanctions

By EDITH M. LEDERER

UNITED NATIONS (AP) - The UN Security Council decided yesterday to maintain sanctions on Libya, reiterating that they will be suspended only after Libya turns over two suspects in the fatal bombing of Pan Am Flight 103.

The council called on the Libyan government to hand over the two intelligence agents for trial in the Netherlands "as soon as possible," noting that the 10th anniversary of the crash of the Pan Am jumbo jet over Lockerbie, Scotland falls on Dec. 21. The Security Council decision, made after a periodic review, was a setback for Libya, which has been pushing to have the six-year-old sanctions lifted immediately.

The council voted on August 27 to suspend sanctions when the two intelligence agents are handed over for trial. It also threatened additional measures against Libya if the suspects fail to appear for trial before a panel of three Scottish judges under

Scottish law.

The two suspects - Abdel Megrahi and Lamen Fhimah - are accused of planting a bomb aboard the flight, which exploded on December 21, 1988, killing 270 people.

The council has not set any target date for Libya to hand over the suspects before it considers further sanctions. But Britain and the United States, which agreed to hold a trial in the Netherlands in hopes of finally resolving the case, are pressing for a speedy response.

US Ambassador Peter Burtleigh and British Ambassador Jeremy Greenstock said they want to see the two suspects delivered for trial well before the December 21 anniversary.

Col. Muammar Gaddafi has said his government has "no objection" to holding a trial in the Netherlands, but Libya has been seeking clarification of the US-British offer to hold the trial in a third country.

Greenstock, speaking as the cur-

rent council president, said council members welcomed the fact that Secretary-General Kofi Annan's legal team is providing clarifications of trial procedures to the Libyans. "Council members were encouraged by the relatively positive trend of those developments," he said.

Speaking in his role as Britain's ambassador, Greenstock said London and Washington had been providing "very full and detailed clarifications to all the Libyan requests for information." He said the two suspects "should have no fears about their rights in the trial process, about their rights if they are convicted of serving a sentence in the Scottish system. We've provided, for instance, reassurance to the Libyan authorities that all religious, dietary, and health requests would be met. There would be visits by clerics or family members," Greenstock said.

Responding to Libyan concerns about the base chosen by the Dutch to hold the trial, he said it is a pure-

ly Dutch facility - not an air base - and has the best physical arrangements available for a trial, including a hospital. The US Air Force used the base from 1954 to 1993.

Before the vote, the Libyan Foreign Ministry accused the United States and Britain of threatening tighter sanctions while Libya was still seeking clarifications.

Libya is still awaiting "all required answers" and "does not accept any claim that it is procrastinating to mark time, as alleged by the other parties," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement released by Libya's UN Mission.

A senior US official said the United States wants an official reaction from Libya to the August 27 resolution in the near future.

UN sanctions were imposed in 1992 to push Libya to surrender the suspects. The measures ban air travel to and from the country, prohibit arms sales, freeze some assets abroad, and limit sales of oil equipment.

Poet Ted Hughes dies at 68

By KRISTIN GAZLAY

LONDON (AP) - British poet laureate Ted Hughes, whose stormy marriage to the anguished American poet Sylvia Plath dogged his reputation after her suicide, has died, his publisher said yesterday. He was 68.

Hughes died Wednesday at his home in Devon after a 18-month battle with cancer, which he had kept secret, said Matthew Evans, chairman of the publisher Faber and Faber.

"Not only was he one of the greatest poets of the 20th century, but he was the most extraordinary



Ted Hughes

man," Evans said. A collection of searingly intense poems published by Hughes this year, called *Birthday Letters*, shed new light on his difficult six-year marriage to the tortured Plath, brought him sympathy, and won him rave reviews.

Some Plath fans called Hughes a murderer and his name has been repeatedly hacked off her gravestone in Yorkshire, northern England.

But the reclusive Hughes chose not to defend himself after Plath's suicide on February 11, 1963, months after he had left her for another woman. She gassed herself in the kitchen, leaving milk and cookies for the couple's two children in the next room.

Evans noted that there was "a great deal of understanding" after Hughes put forth his story for the first time - and revealed the obvious depth of his love for Plath - in the 88 poems that make up *Birthday Letters*, chronicling the couple's meeting, marriage, and separation.

"He wanted *Birthday Letters* to be published, because he knew he was seriously ill. He wanted to publish the work before he died," the publisher said. "It was the nearest thing to an autobiography."

The poems surprised many with their startling intimacy. Of the first time the couple made love, Hughes wrote: "You were slim and lithe and smooth as a fish/ You were a new world. My new world/ So this is America, I marvelled/ Beautiful, beautiful America."

Hughes, poet laureate since 1984, refused to be interviewed about the poems. But in a letter read by his editor, Christopher Reid, who accepted the Forward Poetry prize for *Birthday Letters* on Hughes's behalf this year, he called the book "a gathering of the occasions - written with no plan over about 25 years - in which I tried to open a direct, private, inner contact with my first wife, not thinking to make a poem, thinking mainly to evoke her presence to myself and to feel her there listening."



Turkey's 75th anniversary

A Turkish high-school teacher and his students enjoy the celebrations marking the 75th anniversary of the Turkish Republic at Ataturk's mausoleum in Ankara yesterday. Mustafa Kemal Ataturk founded the republic in 1923 following the collapse of the Ottoman empire. (AP)

Heavy rains cause floods in W. Europe

BADEN-BADEN, Germany (AP) - Heavy rains flooded low-lying areas yesterday across western Europe, including this historic spa town, where elegant tree-lined boulevards were under water.

Flood alarms sounded in Baden-Baden just after midnight. By morning, soldiers were sandbagging the swollen Oos River that runs through the center of the Black Forest near the southwestern border with France. The train station also was flooded.

ARD television reported that 20 Roman Catholic nuns from a convent near Baden-Baden also joined in to help sandbag.

Harsh storms that started late Tuesday killed at least three people - one in Germany, one in the Czech Republic, and one in Switzerland.

All were involved in vehicle accidents with trees uprooted by wind.

Prince and paramour attend London synagogue wedding - separately

LONDON (AP) - They've dined together, partied together, and even vacationed together, but so far they haven't appeared in public together.

Longtime paramours Prince Charles and Camilla Parker Bowles attended the wedding of society friends Santa Palmer-Tomkinson and writer Simon Sebag-Montefiore on Thursday, but dashed hopes it would mark their first appearance as a couple.

The pair crushed photographers' hopes by arriving 20 minutes apart.

Charles, wearing a bright yellow waistcoat and morning suit, waved to reporters and members of the public outside the north London synagogue. His younger son, 14-year-old Harry, also waved when people called out his name.

Mrs. Parker Bowles, who is divorced, already had arrived by then with her two grown children.

The couple broke precedent on Sunday by issuing their first joint statement to deny cooperating in a new royal book that contains damaging allegations about Charles's former wife, the late Princess Diana.

While Britons have warmed to Charles since Diana's death, opinion polls show a majority of people still object to the possibility of the heir to the throne marrying Mrs. Parker Bowles.

Vatican takes first look at Inquisition

VATICAN CITY (AP) - The Vatican assembled a blue-ribbon panel of scholars yesterday to examine the Inquisition, and declared its readiness to submit the church's darkest institution to the judgment of history.

The three-day symposium is part of the Roman Catholic Church's countdown to the year 2000. Pope John Paul II wants the church to begin the new millennium with a clear conscience, which means

facing up to past sins. "The church cannot cross the threshold of the new millennium without pressing its children to purify themselves in repentance for their errors, infidelity, incoherence," Cardinal Roger Eickegary said, opening the conference.

The holy inquisitors went after Protestants, Jews, and Muslims from the 13th to the 19th century. Ecclesiastical "thought police" tried, tortured, and burned people at the stake for heresy and other crimes. The Inquisition's index of banned books endured until 1966, and it was 1992 before the church rehabilitated Galileo, condemned for saying the Earth wasn't the center of the universe.

The symposium, which gathers experts from inside and outside the church, is the Vatican's first critical look at the church's record of repression.

The German Embassy in Israel, the "Goethe-Institut" Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, the Israeli - German Society and CENTRA invite you to attend the following

Lectures of Erich Loest

(author e.g. of the books

„Nikolaikirche“, „Völkerschlachtdenkmal“):

Nazareth, 01 / 11 / 98, 05.00 - 07.00 p.m.

Cultural Center, Tel: 06-6554696

Lecture with following discussion:

„Das Zusammenwachsen von Ost und West, 9 Jahre danach.“

Haifa, 02 / 11 / 1998, 11.00 a.m. - 01.00 p.m.

in the „Keller House“, 2 Keller St.,

Tel/Fax: 04-8375529

Lecture with following discussion:

„Das Zusammenwachsen von Ost und West, 9 Jahre danach.“

Tel Aviv, 02 / 11 / 1998, 05.00 - 07.00 p.m.

in the „Goethe-Institut“ Tel Aviv, 4 Weizman St.,

Asia House, Tel: 03-6917266

Lecture with following discussion:

„9 Jahre nach dem Mauerfall, Rückblick und Perspektiven deutscher Identitäten.“

Jerusalem, 05 / 11 / 1998, 07.00 - 09.00 p.m.

in the „Goethe-Institut“ Jerusalem, 15 Sokolov St.,

Tel: 02-5610627

Lecture with following discussion:

„Geistesleben in Ost und West - nach 9 Jahren Mauerfall noch immer einander fremd?“

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We announce in deep sorrow
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née Berger.

The funeral took place on October 30.

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Yaalon Families

Michael and Shirley Gibbons

together with the family
mourn with the Bloomberg Family the loss of

DR. HARRY BLOOMBERG

We extend sincere condolences to

Molly, Naomi, Cecil, Hillel

and the entire family

To Mr. Charles Goodman

We extend our deepest condolences to you on the passing
of your mother

MOLLY

May you be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem

Moshe Nativ, Arieh Abir

Amigour



Israel Museum

The Israel Museum, Jerusalem

deeply mourns the passing of its longtime benefactor docent and beloved friend

DITA MORAWETZ

and extends heartfelt condolences to Paul and the family

The funeral leaves today, Friday, at 11 a.m. from the Shaganer Funeral Home and proceeds to the Eretz Ha'Haim Cemetery in Beit Shמש

סוכה של הרצל

S. African probe condemns all sides

By BRENDAN BOYLE

PRETORIA (Reuters) - South Africa's Truth Commission yesterday slammed atrocities by black liberation leaders as well as apartheid's white masters in a historic report that the ruling party had tried in vain to gag.

The commission held former President P.W. Botha, President Nelson Mandela's ex-wife Winnie Zulu leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi, and the ruling African National Congress (ANC) all accountable for gross violations of human rights.

The report also said most South African businesses benefited from apartheid, committed human rights violations, and should assist in redressing apartheid's legacy of poverty.

In a 3,500-page report on its two-year inquiry into human rights under apartheid, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) recommended prosecution of those responsible: "Where amnesty has not been sought or has been denied, prosecution should be considered where evidence exists that an individual has committed a gross human rights violation."

The report was handed to Mandela at a ceremony in Pretoria just over two hours after a Cape Town court dismissed a last-ditch bid by the ANC to block its release. The ANC argued in papers prepared during the night that it had not been given a fair chance to respond to the commission's allegations, which include complicity in the deaths inside South Africa of civilians.

The commission, headed by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu, branded apartheid, the policy of white domination enforced in 1948 and dismantled in 1994, a crime against humanity.

Tutu said early yesterday he was "devastated" by the ANC's attempt to block publication. He greeted the ruling party's court defeat as "a triumph for truth and humanity."

Mandela told the handover ceremony he "accepts the report as it is, with all its imperfections, as an aid the TRC has given us to help reconcile and build our nation."

The panel listed crimes including assassination, torture, and abduction by members of the former white minority government.

It said Botha, the former hard-line president nicknamed the Great Crocodile, "contributed to and facilitated a climate in which



South African President Nelson Mandela (left) accepts the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission from its chairperson, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, at a special ceremony in Pretoria yesterday.

the above gross violations of human rights could and did occur, and as such is accountable for such violations."

Among state actions for which it said Botha was accountable, the TRC included "the deliberate unlawful killing and attempted killing of persons opposed to the policies of the government, within and outside South Africa."

Botha, 82, denies any wrongdoing during his 10 years as president and has refused to seek amnesty under a parallel provision of the truth commission law.

The commission said also that Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, divorced by Mandela two years ago on grounds of infidelity, was politically and morally responsible for the actions of her so-called

Mandela United Football Club, a gang which abused, abducted, and killed Soweto township youths.

The report said she did nothing to stop the "football club," and instead allowed a climate to evolve in which any who opposed her were branded apartheid stooges, with bloody results.

Madikizela-Mandela was convicted in 1991 of kidnapping and assault and was dragged before the TRC in 1997 in a separate inquiry at the request of Joyce Seipei, mother of a murdered black teenager.

The report said Inkatha Freedom Party leader and Home

Affairs Minister Buthelezi, who also has refused to seek amnesty, was responsible for human rights violations.

A half-page of detailed allegations against former President F.W. de Klerk, who shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Mandela in 1993, was blacked out.

WORLD

in brief

UK, Germany say Russia tops EU agenda

LONDON (Reuters) - Britain and Germany agreed yesterday that the European Union must put Russia's political and economic crisis at the top of its agenda in its attempt to forge a common foreign and security policy.

Foreign Secretary Robin Cook and his German counterpart, Joschka Fischer, told reporters that stabilizing democracy in Russia is vital for the EU's 15 member states and it is "an urgent priority" to reach a common position on what to do. Diplomats said no EU government favors a resumption of large-scale financial aid to Russia without a watertight economic reform plan, which Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov's government has so far failed to deliver.

British government defends Pinochet arrest

LONDON (AP) - Despite losing the court battle over the extradition of Gen. Augusto Pinochet, Britain's foreign secretary yesterday defended the arrest of the former Chilean dictator on warrants from Spain.

Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said the High Court's rejection of two arrest warrants from a Spanish magistrate was not a slap in the face for Britain, which had Pinochet arrested October 16 as he recovered from back surgery at a private London Clinic.

"The Foreign Office has consistently taken the position that we want to see due process of law carried out," he said. "The ruling that the divisional court gave in the context of international law is now subject to appeal."

Iran commerce minister in Iraq for trade talks

BAGHDAD (AP) - Iranian Commerce Minister Mohammed Shariatmadari arrived in Baghdad yesterday for talks on boosting trade, the official Iraqi News Agency reported.

Shariatmadari will also attend the opening of the Baghdad International Fair scheduled for tomorrow. Representatives from 30 countries and 66 foreign companies are to take part.

Iran's pavilion at the Baghdad fair this year is among the largest, exhibiting foodstuffs, medicines, household utensils, cars and agricultural implements, the Iraqi agency reported.

Woman who killed baby at prom gets 15 years

FREEHOLD, New Jersey (AP) - The woman who gave birth at her high-school dance and then killed her newborn and returned to the dance floor, was sentenced yesterday to 15 years in prison.

Under a plea agreement, Melissa Drexler, 20, could be released in slightly less than three years. Drexler pleaded guilty in August to aggravated manslaughter.

Fifty years of helping kids in need.



Beverly Black '71, late director of the funds, welcomes new immigrants from Ethiopia with toy strollers after their arrival following Operation Solomon in 1991.



To celebrate its Jubilee, the fund will be holding a charity dinner on November 17th at the Bible Lands Museum.

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MINISTRY OF SCIENCE



Program for the Development of Scientific and Technological Strategic Research

CALLS FOR PROPOSALS AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SCHOLARSHIPS FOR THE YEAR 1999

Many research projects carried out during the past ten years in various countries, including Israel, have confirmed that investment in research and development makes an important contribution to economic growth and prosperity and the ability to compete on the world arena.

In order to realize the economic potential of science and reduce the "ripening period" - the time required before the knowledge gained from basic academic research can mature into applied research and development - the Ministry of Science has initiated the establishment of National Committees in priority areas of science and technology in which Israel enjoys a relative advantage. The National Committees aid the Ministry in locating and defining the key technologies on which to focus in each field in order to extract the potential economic benefits and applications appropriate to the capabilities of Israeli industry.

Since 1995, the Ministry has been supporting strategic research programs in eight priority fields: Electrotechnics, Biotechnology, Advanced Materials, Information Technology and Telecommunications, Microelectronics, Applied Mathematics, Environmental and Water Quality, and Space Technology.

The budget allocated for this purpose during these years enabled the support of research programs, training scientific manpower and assignment of equipment in a sum totaling over NIS330 million at 1998 prices. Below are the topics for the 1999 Calls For Proposals of the Ministry.

It is my sincere wish that the scientific community and other interested citizens will participate in this Program for the Strategic Development of Science and Technology which is so important for the growth of the economy and the social well-being of our country.

Silvan Shalom
Minister of Science

ELECTROOPTICS

Applications for research grants in the following subjects:

- Development, processing and storage of optoelectrical signals.
- Miniature light sources.
- Electrooptical devices and sensors.
- Unconventional optics.
- Active vision and picture comprehension.
- Electrooptical methods and devices in biology and medicine.

ADVANCED MATERIALS

Applications for research grants in the following subjects:

- Functional materials.
- Alloys with controlled micro- and nano-structures for use under harsh service conditions.
- Bio-medical materials for diagnostics and therapeutics.
- Composite materials.
- Green materials and processes.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

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Rabin's legacy

The third anniversary of the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, to be marked on Sunday, comes at an opportune moment. According to Rabin's daughter, Dalia Pelosoff, "nothing has changed" since the murder that is seared in the minds of every Israeli. The Wye agreement, however, is testimony to the fact that this charge, to the extent it is true, is not just an indictment, but a tribute to the resilience of Israeli democracy and the path set by Yitzhak Rabin.

Rabin, who as a practical man was not inordinately impressed with his political opponents' verbal pyrotechnics, would no doubt have derived some satisfaction from seeing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu implement Oslo so faithfully. Though neither Netanyahu nor his critics will admit it, the path that Rabin carved out is fundamentally the path Israel is still attempting to follow: trading sovereignty for peace, and separating Palestinians and Israelis within the same small land.

Rabin's assassin succeeded in robbing the nation of a rare and irreplaceable leader, and his family of husband, father, and grandfather. The assassin failed miserably, however, in his primary goal - changing the course of Israel's pursuit of peace.

Netanyahu, far from abandoning Oslo, is implementing that agreement to an extent that a Labor government may have been unable to were he leading the opposition. All of his attacks upon the concessions that previous governments allegedly planned do not change the fact that it is Netanyahu who, upon implementing Wye, will have made Oslo's most wrenching concessions - the withdrawal from Hebron and the fleshing out of the Palestinian proto-state.

As a measure of how far the Rabinization of Netanyahu has come, the primary reason that a bill to schedule early elections has become a dead letter is that the Democratic Arab Party has pledged not to support it, while the right-wing, Moledet Party has filed the first post-Wye no-confidence motion in the Knesset. It was, of course, the then-Netanyahu opposition that implicitly attacked Rabin for relying upon Arab MKs to provide a critical margin of support for peace agreements.

The main difference in the political landscape since Rabin's assassination is the broadening of the consensus for continuing the Oslo process - first as a visceral rejection of the assassin's ideology, and then as a result of Netanyahu's however reluctant embrace of Oslo. In this context, it is perhaps not surprising that the right-wing fringe is feeling even more cornered than under Rabin, and is now lashing out against icons of

the Right, such as Netanyahu and Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon.

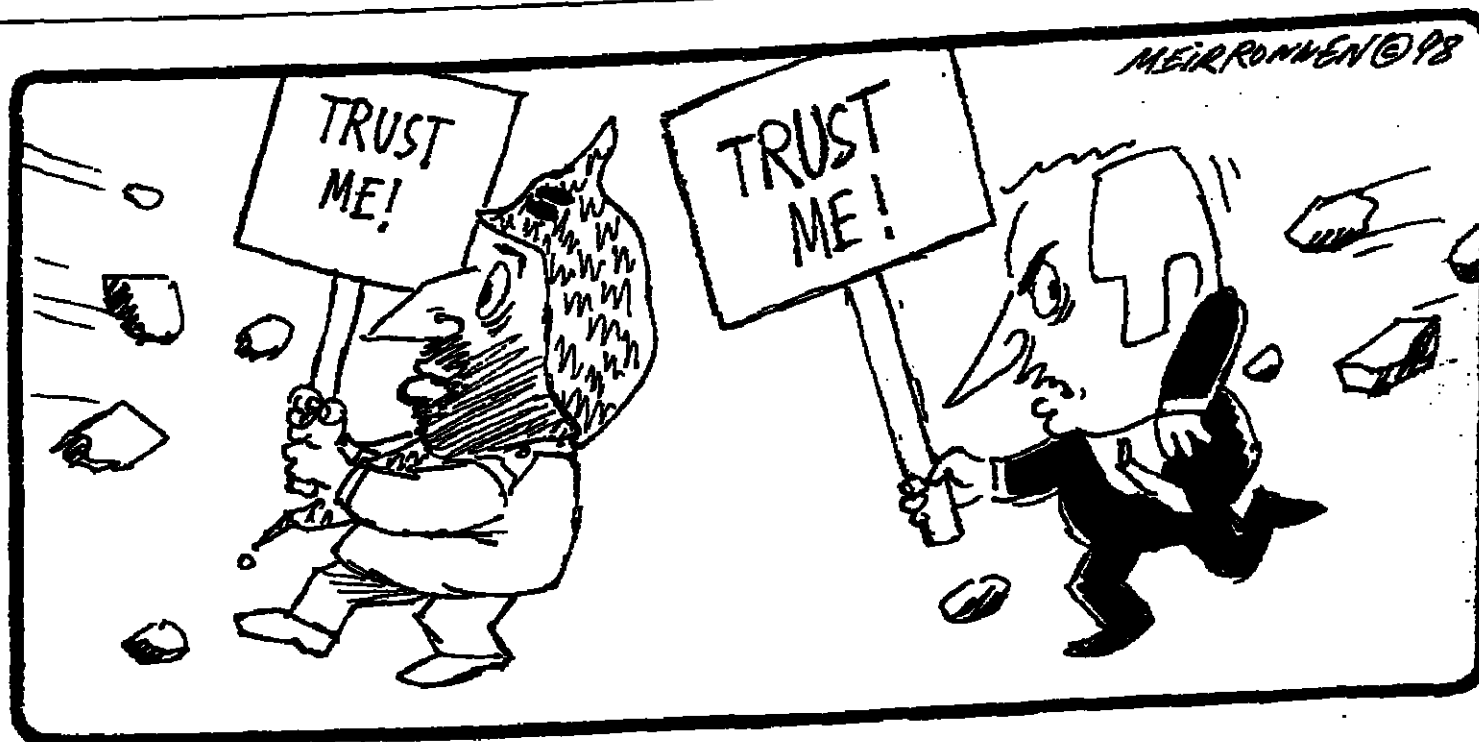
Even settler leader Aharon Domb reports receiving death threats, perhaps because he has forcefully condemned those who call Netanyahu a "traitor." The sense that there are those who not only have not learned from Rabin's assassination, but who are now recreating an atmosphere of violence, is a chilling one. As Rabin himself said in his final speech, "Violence erodes the basis of Israeli democracy. It must be condemned and isolated. This is not the way of the State of Israel." Now that the unthinkable has already happened, those who oppose Oslo and yet believe in democracy have a responsibility to speak out against the violent fringe. Religious leaders, particularly those who have helped fan a messianic connection to the land, must also stress the limits upon this vision from countervailing Jewish and democratic values.

The security services and judicial system, for their part, must toughen enforcement against violent Jewish extremism, without infringing upon legitimate free speech. Thankfully, the security services have already learned from Rabin's assassination that they cannot rely on "profiles" of potential assailants, but must protect key officials from anyone who may threaten them.

The lessons from the assassination, however, do not end with the obvious changes in security measures. The question of the relationship between a tense political climate and actual violence is a controversial and complicated one. But even if there were no threat of violence, the culture of debate in Israel should be moderated for its own sake. It is difficult to have a coherent debate over peace and security, for example, when the Left denies the Right's interest in peace, and the Right denies the Left's interest in security. It is standard practice on both sides of the political spectrum to attack the motives of the other side, rather than granting legitimate motives and arguing over issues of judgment. When the motives in questions are such high-stakes matters as peace and security, denying legitimate motives can quickly degenerate into cries of "traitor" or "murderer."

There is more to healthy democratic culture than freedom of speech, or lack of incitement to violence. Though the consensus surrounding the peace process has expanded, the stakes ahead will only grow, putting our democratic culture to even more severe tests. Rabin taught us that peace with our neighbors must be built upon mutual respect for their dreams and aspirations. The same lesson must be applied to the quest for peace at home.

OPINION



The next crisis

MOSHE ZAK

To make it easier for the PA to act against terrorism, Israel agreed - with no justification whatever - to the "even-handedness" game between "Palestinian terrorism" and "Israeli terrorism."

The agreement states: "The Palestinian side agreed to take all measures necessary in order to prevent acts of terrorism, crime, and hostilities directed against the

embarrassing the Palestinians.

THIS ISN'T just a question of honor - not to speak lightly of honor. This balance between Israel and the Palestinians grants the CIA "judges" a basis for even-handedness between a mass Palestinian attack and a wild act by an insane Israeli.

To make it easier for the PA to act against terrorism, Israel agreed - with no justification whatever - to the 'even-handedness' game

Israeli side, against individuals falling under the Israeli side's authority and against their property, just as the Israeli side agreed to take all measures necessary in order to prevent acts of terrorism, crime, and hostilities against Palestinians and against their property. The two sides also agree to take legal measures... within their jurisdiction and to prevent incitement against each other by any organizations, groups, or individuals within their jurisdiction."

The Hebron Agreement was accompanied by a memo, written by Dennis Ross with the approval of Benjamin Netanyahu and Yasser Arafat, on what the Palestinians were required to do to combat terrorism, without any reservations. They were obliged inter alia to reduce the Palestinian Police force and to confiscate all illegal arms. Now, 17 months later, not only has the shekel been devalued, Palestinian commitments have also been devalued, and Israel has to bear the mark of shame on its forehead, saying that terrorism is part of its political and social scene. Anything to avoid

The linkage between Israeli withdrawal and a parallel step by the Palestinians is formulated in Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's letter to Netanyahu: "We believe its parallel phased approach will help provide greater confidence to both sides in the implementation process, since actions in each stage of the time line are to be completed by both sides before moving to the next stage."

This is a vague formulation that doesn't exactly correspond to what was said orally to Netanyahu at the Wye talks. It doesn't imply Israel's unchallenged right to break off the withdrawal if the PA doesn't fulfill its commitments in the war against terrorism. The annoying comparison between Israeli and Palestinian terrorism is liable to grant the PA more justifications for wriggling out of its promises.

There is indeed a high probability that this will be one of the points of dispute between Israel and the Palestinians over the next 12 weeks. But it won't be a subject for heated argument. The fiercest

crisis will break out over the settlements. The agreement doesn't contain one word on the question of the settlements.

Israel didn't agree to even-handedness between construction in the settlements and a unilateral declaration of the establishment of a Palestinian state. The Americans and the Palestinians didn't request a total stop to construction by Jews and Arabs alike in Judea and Samaria. They limited it only to Jewish building. Netanyahu couldn't have made such a commitment, which means discriminating against the Israeli settlers without endangering cabinet approval of the agreement.

This is why he returned to the formula that in the next three months no new settlements will be established, but it's impossible to freeze existing settlements and not build new houses as required.

Palestinian pressure on this question resulted in the "constructive ambiguity" solution: The issue would be dealt with in an American statement after the summit.

And in a statement by the State Department this week, it was said that the US requests that both sides refrain from unilateral actions during the negotiating period. The Palestinians apparently received an oral American promise that this call referred also to the settlements, while the Israelis were promised that it was addressed to Arafat's planned declaration of a Palestinian state.

One may assume that the Palestinians will raise an outcry at any building in the settlements. If this outcry is echoed in Israel, it is liable to develop into a severe crisis, and possibly even cause the shelving of the implementation of the agreement.

If the PA discovers that its demand for a settlement freeze doesn't meet with much public support in Israel, the agreement will limp on to the completion of the second withdrawal.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WOE TO US

Sir, - It is with a sense of immense distress and grief that I write to you as the future of the Jewish people in our ancestral homeland is threatened yet again.

Without regard for the safety of the hundreds of thousands of Jews whose lives are now put in danger, yet another "peace agreement" has been signed with those who seek to destroy us.

Our Sages mandate us to set aside the laws of the Holy Sabbath if there is a doubt that an individual's life may be in jeopardy. Even when faced with a real and actual threat to the lives of the citizens it was elected to protect, this government will set aside nothing in its heady desire to make deals with our enemies.

Woe to us. Not only has the government eschewed one of its principal roles, namely the protection and security of its citizens, but also it has unconditionally aban-

doned its ideological commitment to the territorial integrity of the totality of the land of Eretz Yisrael.

Faced with an enemy that has so absolutely failed to carry out any of its commitments to date, the Israeli government has accepted a further slew of promises.

From within the depths of our anguish and pain we must redouble, each and every one of us, our own personal efforts to merit the continued sojourn of our people in Eretz Yisrael.

Let it not, Heaven forbid, be our lack of steadfastness in clinging to our sacred traditions that causes us to be estranged from the Land of our Fathers.

GRAND RABBI
LEVI HOROWITZ
The Bostoner Rebbe.

Jerusalem.

BEVERLEE BLACK

Sir, - I was saddened to learn of Beverlee Black's passing, and I want to offer you my sincerest condolences.

I have had the honor of knowing Beverlee for many years in her position at *The Jerusalem Post*, particularly for her generosity towards others.

Beverlee will be remembered for her tireless efforts on behalf of those in need, her true love for the State of Israel, and most especial-

ly for the warmth of her personality that I always found personally enriching.

On behalf of the people of Jerusalem, and myself, I send my condolences to you all for the great loss that we all feel by Beverlee's death.

EHUD OLMERT
Mayor of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem.

FLOWERY WISHES

Sir, - Shame on our prime minister's detractors for saying we gained nothing from the Wye Plantation talks.

Didn't they see the beautiful bouquet of flowers he received from President Arafat?

MOSHE SAPERSTEIN

Neveh Dekalim.

WELCOME ADDITION

Sir, - Thank you for adding Rabbi Michael Marmur to your list of regular contributors.

I have enjoyed every article he has written.

LESLIE COHEN

Kibbutz Ein Hashofet.

LACK OF DIRECTION

Sir, - We were recently privileged to visit your wonderful country after a nine year gap. The development is incredible and very impressive. We did note however the lack of directional signs to tourist information facilities and their very irregular hours. The lack of signs was very much a problem in Tiberias, where there wasn't even a sign on or in front of the office.

PARLA AND
HERSHEY BINDER

Los Angeles, CA.

Try and try again

GERALD M. STEINBERG

Americans who grew up reading the comics are familiar with a character named Charlie Brown - a well-intentioned but naive boy who spends his days struggling with the challenges of life.

Every year, at the beginning of football season (the American version), "poor old Charlie Brown" agrees to test his kicking skills. Lucy, his worldly wise neighbor, promises to hold the ball in the kicking position, so that Charlie Brown can take a full-speed run-up to it. And then, just as he reaches the ball, Lucy pulls it away, and Charlie Brown ends up flat on his back.

The following year, Lucy promises that she has reformed, and is no longer interested in subjecting the young boy to ridicule. So, after pondering the issue for some time, Charlie Brown decides to trust Lucy, starts his run up, reaches the ball, and "wham," he falls on his face. Lucy, it turns out, has not finished teaching him the ways of the world.

Israel and the Jewish people are a collective Charlie Brown, with the Clinton administration and Palestinians teaming up as Lucy. When the official rhetoric and messages from the spin doctors are stripped away, the Wye Memorandum, with its Palestinian pledges to halt terror and the hate speech that fuels it, are further versions of previous promises.

We have heard it all before - at Oslo and Washington in 1993, in the 1994 Gaza-Jericho agreement, the interim agreement of September 1995, and after the January 1997 Hebron Agreement.

At each stage, the Palestinians gain control over more land, mak-

ing irreversible progress toward an independent state, while repeating the same promises. Each time, we are given solemn assurances that now the Palestinians really mean it.

As part of the Oslo process, Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin exchanged formal letters, in which the PLO renounced the use of terrorism and other acts of violence, and pledged to convey this message by amending the Palestinian Covenant. However, the terror and incitement continued, and the Palestinian National Council has yet to receive or consider an amended text.

Two years later, the interim agreement established the Palestinian Police force in order to "act systematically against all expressions of violence and terror," confiscate illegal firearms, and "arrest and prosecute individuals suspected of perpetrating acts of violence and terror."

This pledge came amidst a series of suicide bombings and other acts of violence against Israel, and only a few months before the wave of terror in early 1996 that effectively froze the process. The Palestinians got their "police force," and expanded its number far beyond the agreed limits, but these pledges

and infrastructure"; to strengthen security cooperation with Israel; to apprehend, prosecute, and punish terrorists; to reduce the size of the paramilitary force; and to prevent "incitement and hostile propaganda."

These requirements were also specified in the 1995 interim agreement, also signed in Washington, but had to be repeated again in 1997 (and once again last week at Wye) because they were not honored.

In the Wye agreement, the Palestinians have made these pledges for the third or fourth time since Oslo, promising "zero tolerance for terror," a real effort to apprehend, prosecute, and punish terrorists, and a reduction in the size of its bloated armed forces to the level specified in the earlier

agreements.

The PA also pledged to develop a "work plan" to be "shared with" the US "to ensure the systematic... combat of terrorist organizations."

In practice, this means that in addition to Israeli-Palestinian security cooperation mechanisms set up earlier, CIA officials will meet with Palestinian security officials on a biweekly basis.

In the previous cases, Arafat and the PA made no move to even attempt to show that their actions might match their words and commitments with respect to terrorism and incitement. They did not attempt to disarm Hamas and destroy the terrorist infrastructure.

This time, immediately after the White House signing ceremony, the PA launched a highly publicized raid on the offices of Fatah in Ramallah. This action, which led to protests, violence, and one fatality, may have been designed to show that Arafat is indeed serious this time. However, past behavior suggests that the objective was to create the illusion of action, while again avoiding a clash with Hamas.

Despite the abysmal track record, the Israeli government and, more importantly, the public appear to be willing to give the "peace and security process" yet another chance.

Like Charlie Brown running up to kick the ball, hoping that this time, finally, his partners will fulfill their obligations and he will not end up flat on his back, we remain cautiously hopeful.

But unlike a fictional character in a comic strip, for us, there is a limit. For the Oslo process, this really is the last chance.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

65 years ago: On October 30, 1933, *The Palestine Post* reported that the High Commissioner curtailed the ceremony of the formal opening of Haifa's new harbor due to the recent disorders. The *Post*, however, had published a special large supplement to mark the occasion.

25 years ago: On October 30, 1973, *The Jerusalem Post* reported that Israel held the Arab states responsible for the fate of some 400 of its soldiers reported missing since the beginning of the war.

The US State Department denied reports that it brought pressure on Israel to allow food to

reach the entrapped Egyptian Third Army. The Pentagon announced that it would "start from scratch in assessing Israel's military needs and will not be bound by any prewar supply arrangements."

Alexander Zvielli

POSTSCRIPT

IF IT looks like a pirate or a witch just cut you off in the middle of rush hour, Disneyland is probably pretty close.

Disneyland recently relaxed a 43-year-old rule prohibiting its costumes from leaving the compound. Under a trial policy, 1,000 of the

park's 8,000 employees can wear their goofy suits to and from work. Disney resisted the change to protect the company's squeaky-clean image from wayward workers who might humiliate it.

"If you have a Disney-clad employee, it's a problem," said a spokesman.

six-pack of beer, it deflates the value of the Disney image," explained one employee.

The change was allowed because construction at the park and long checkout lines at the wardrobe department were delaying some workers on

The park's biggest fear is that employees may pretend to lose their costumes and sell them on the black market to Disney collectors.

Marquee character outfits like Mickey, Goofy and Donald still will be kept at the park under careful watch.

סדרה של הלאה

Remembering Yitzhak Rabin

MARK A. HELLER

We would have remembered anyway. With every passing year, the memory fades just a little bit more, and the ache dulls a little bit more. That is only natural. Life goes on. It may even happen, a few decades from now, that young people will know Yitzhak Rabin only as a person in the history books, a name on a street or a building.

But for those of us who lived before he died, the approach of November is still reason enough to

gists have been saying ever since: Netanyahu never called anyone a traitor; he never incited to murder; the vast, overwhelming majority of his supporters and partners are not fanatics.

It may even be true that Yigal Amir, the man who pulled the trigger, and those who inspired him before and sympathized with him afterward, are just deviants, "wild weeds." But it's also true that Netanyahu appealed to their instincts and passions, cultivated their spiritual leaders and the other

How grotesque that the pain, sadness and anger are triggered this year by the same scenes that led to Mt. Herzl in 1995

feel again, however briefly, the same sharp pain, sadness and anger, not just at the last scene at Mt. Herzl, but at all the other scenes that went before and, like some kind of Greek tragedy, led to it. No additional reminder is needed — not the ceremonies, not the candles, not the music — nothing but the calendar.

How grotesque, then, that the pain, sadness and anger are triggered this year, not by ceremonies, or by candles, or by music, or even by the calendar, but by the same scenes that led to Mt. Herzl — of wild-eyed demonstrators, half-demented by the ecstasy of their hatred, screaming "traitor" and "murderer."

And how ironic that the object of their frenzy is not just another prime minister, but one who invested most of his adult life and much of his considerable energy, intellect and political skill trying to discredit Rabin's road, only to find himself further down it.

Why are the zealots so outraged at Binyamin Netanyahu? Why do they feel so betrayed? Because they believed that he belonged to their world, that he was "flesh of their flesh," so they helped put him into office.

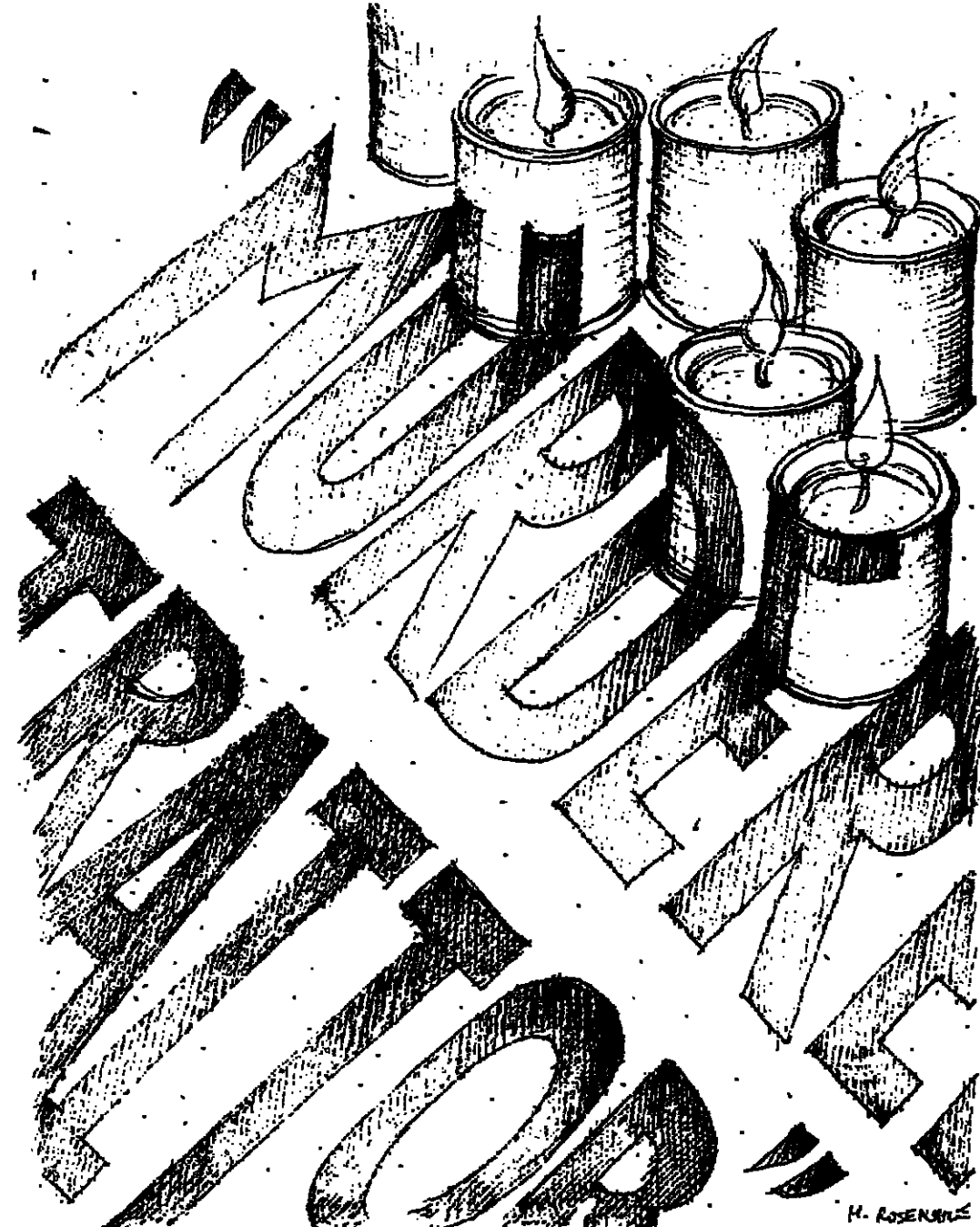
Yes, it's true what all the apolo-

high priests of the settler movement so intent on redeeming the rest of us, and spoke with a vocabulary and a body-language that resonated with them.

SO IT IS doubly distressing for them to discover that the same man who speaks about "the rock of our existence," ultimately does not belong to their conceptual universe or share their fantasies, that he is not really a mystic, moved by messianic visions of redemption and the end of days, or a political realist indifferent to the mundane realities of power and counter-power, and, worst of all, that his commitment to the land is conditional and not absolute.

Even now, it is still not clear that Netanyahu has internalized Rabin's decision and concluded that the peace that needs to be made should be embraced positively, rather than conceded grudgingly, in order to turn the quest for it to Israel's best advantage. But it is clear, especially to the demonstrators in front of his house and office, that Netanyahu has embarked on Rabin's way of deciding.

If Rabin could know that, perhaps it would be some slight consolation to him. But not much, and not at all to those left behind who



still feel his loss.

For with all of his qualities, Rabin's greatness did not lie in some arbitrary act of willpower, but rather in his ability to assess reality correctly. Though he was not the first Israeli to do this, he was the first Israeli leader with the courage and power to do something about it.

The same reality is beginning to impose itself on Netanyahu. The

learning process has been long, and the years in between have been used mainly to squander time, money, goodwill, political capital, lives, and hope.

Nothing can ever mitigate or compensate for the enormity of the crime that ended Rabin's life. But if Netanyahu had been able somehow to disarm or repress the fanaticism that produced the crime, the rest of us could at least take des-

perate comfort in the thought that something good came of it.

Even that small solace is denied us. Instead, what has happened is that one "traitor" and "murderer" has been replaced by another, and even the people screaming "traitor" and "murderer" now understand what so many others believed or hoped from the very first, terrible moment — that it was all for nothing. Such a waste.

Who is being messianic?

Ethan Bronner of *The New York Times* has made Israeli politics simple.

Supporting the Oslo process are liberal, educated Jews of European descent (not to mention Israel's large Arab minority, which unanimously supports those who support the process). In short, just the kind of enlightened folk who read the *Times* (again leaving aside the Arabs). Opposed or skeptical are the traditional, religious, and Jews of Middle Eastern descent.

In another variant of the same theme, the *Times*' Thomas Friedman portrays the only remaining opponents as people beyond rational argument, not motivated by everyday concerns about security, but only by messianic visions of Greater Israel.

As rhetorical devices, these portrayals are brilliant. They provide a handy cover to ignore the oft-reiterated challenges to Oslo purely on security grounds. It is beneath the dignity of such smart, educated people to respond to the common-sense questions of their inferiors. Thus Ehud Barak has consistently refused to answer the question whether Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority have complied with previous commitments.

And even as veteran Israeli elites — as Ari Shavit put it so well in *Ha'aretz* — offer automatic applause for any withdrawal and

automatic catcalls for any pause in withdrawals, they have been strangely reluctant to offer their own vision of what the Palestinians might ultimately accept and how livable it would be. In truth, messianism has both its secular and religious forms, and it could well be argued that the largest group of messianics among us today are the elites.

Messianic thought posits a period of post-history in which all previous rules of human nature and patterns of behavior cease to govern. The lamb and lion lie down peacefully together.

Shimon Peres and Yossi Beilin, architects of the Oslo process, operated on the assumption that precisely such a messianic period has already arrived. For rescuing a financially and politically bankrupt Arafat from the dustbin of history, they assumed that he would be forever grateful and embark on a path leading to peace.

In an astounding leap of faith, they believed that the author of the murder of 38 schoolchildren in Ma'alot, the Coastal Highway massacre, and the *Achille Lauro* hijacking would abandon a life-long career of targeting innocents. More, they assumed that this cagey survivor of often-lethal Arab internal politics would willingly risk civil war within his new

JONATHAN ROSENBLUM

domain to protect Israelis.

So devoutly does the messianic believer hope for the future utopia that he often imagines that the future has already arrived. No evidence can dissuade him.

Let Arafat continue to call for

Just as Neville Chamberlain either did not read or would not believe what Hitler wrote in 'Mein Kampf,' our leaders do not hear or take seriously what Arafat says

jihad immediately after the signing of first Oslo Accord; let him continue to eulogize as "holy martyrs" those whose only cause was the murder of as many Jews as possible; let official Palestinian Authority television show a cute little seven-year-old girl being kissed by a smiling Arafat for her rendition of "I finished practicing on the submachine gun of

return...We swore to take vengeance on our enemies for our killed and wounded"; let the PA advertise for its summer camps on TV with scenes of paramilitary training and chants of "My children, my children are in the suicide squad"; let the website of Arafat's Fatah organization continue to proclaim "liberating Palestine is an Arab, religious, and human obligation."

All this is irrelevant. He is our peace partner.

LIKE HITLER, Arafat is open about his goals. He has repeatedly compared the Oslo treaties to the Treaty of Yarmuk, where Mohammed entered into a peace treaty with the tribes around Medina only to put them to the sword a few years later when his military position had improved.

Just as Neville Chamberlain either did not read or would not believe what Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf*, our leaders do not hear or take seriously what Arafat himself says.

Messianic stirrings are often prompted by despair and hopelessness.

Thus those who challenge the underlying assumptions of Oslo are rarely answered with facts or a conflicting analysis of agreed upon facts, but with a plaintive, "What's the alternative?"

Ignore the new "sacrifices for peace" offered daily, ignore the gaping holes in agreements already signed that will ensure more such sacrifices. The only prescription: "Have a little more faith"; "Show more good will." *Yihye tov*. The tendency of Israeli policy-makers to rely on miracles, noted by James McDonald, the first US ambassador to Israel, continues to hold sway.

Seventy-five percent of Israelis profess support for the Wye agreement. Yet only 18% believe that Arafat will fulfill his undertakings in more than a so-so fashion, and nearly half don't believe that he will keep them at all.

That is mass cognitive dissonance. What, one wonders, will be the parallel of Shabbetai Tzvi's apostasy for our secular messianists? Let me be clear. I too believe in the coming of the messiah. And I fear that he will only come when our situation has become so desperate from every point of view that all will recognize that we have nowhere to turn but God.

At the same time, I will continue to be skeptical of reports of his arrival until the evidence is clear. Until then, I find nothing in Jewish sources to suggest that we should attempt to render our situation as hopeless as possible in order to hasten his arrival.

Middle Israel

AMOTZ ASA-EL

Prince of peace

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a child is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Isaiah IX: 6

Though blessed with a variety of princely, second-generation law-makers — from a naughty, eye-patched battle fox like Moshe Dayan to a bespectacled, verbose nerd like Benny Begin — our political landscape has seen them all come, go, and, at the end of the day, wither away as tragic non-leaders.

Some, like Dan — son of 1950s

— heir to legendary Agudat Yisrael leader Menachem. Like King Solomon's pathetic heir Rehoboam — who responded to the people's tax-cut plea with the memorable "My father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions" — Porush not only dismissed Shas's quest to reconcile IDF service and yeshiva study, but also showed up at a military cemetery where he was nearly knocked down by furious bereaved parents.

And when our princes are conscientious, they lack magnetism, like Benny Begin or Uzi Landau — son of Menachem Begin's transport minister Haim. Whether one

What is it that sabra aristocrats lack when they try to assume leadership?

MK Eliahu — Meridor, impressively played Counsellor to right-wing premiers and Wonderful to their left-leaning opponents; others, like Avraham Burg — son of the politically Everlasting Father Yosef — genuinely strove to become Prince of Peace. Yet the whole lot of them failed to emerge as true ideological revolutionaries and political rebels.

The pattern is clear, and it crosses generations, parties, and personalities.

Sometimes, what these sabra versions of silver-spooned aristocrats lack is guts. The flamboyant Dayan, for instance, whose father, Shmuel, was a member of the first three Knessets (and whose daughter, Yael, is our first third-generation MK), failed to stand up to Golda Meir when, against his advice, she rejected a peace-for-land offer from Anwar Sadat. Had he had the courage to confront her, Dayan would have either averted the Yom Kippur War or emerged from its rubble as Golda's undisputed successor.

Similarly, Uzi Baram, son of 1974-77 labor minister Moshe, recently fled the kitchen when the lukewarm heat emitted from a colorful, but otherwise benign intra-Labor brawl was too much for his 24-hour crusade on Jerusalem.

Not to mention Tzahi Hanegbi, whose bravado as an anti-Camp David Accord's student activist — which complimented mother MK Geula Cohen's rightist outflanking of Menachem Begin — has now withered to a sheepish endorsement of a withdrawal from the Greater Land of Israel.

SURELY, to dismiss outright second-generation politicians as wimpish nonentities would be superficial, unfair, and, at times, also unfounded.

Benny Begin's challenge to Binyamin Netanyahu, for instance, or Baram's refusal to join the 1988 unity government, were gutsy by any measure and won them respect even among bitter opponents. By the same token, Meridor's resignation as finance minister last year was a conscientious move seldom seen in Israeli politics, where clinging to the altar's horns is principle, law, and norm all at once.

Similarly, Ehud Olmert's — son of 1950s MK Mordechai — role, as a 20-something punk, in an attempt to unseat Menachem Begin as Herut's leader, nearly nipped in the bud his already illustrious career.

When they don't lack guts they lack sensitivity, like Meir Porush

likes them or not, one must admit they are sincerely dedicated to a conviction, but stand no chance to fulfill it.

Or take Yehuda Ben-Meir, who entered the Knesset in 1971 because he was next on the list after the death of his father, MK Yisrael Rosenberg. Ben-Meir's transfiguration from Gush Emunim patron in the 1970s to Meimad prophet in the 1980s, while admirable in many other ways, ended in a political decreasendo with his failure to land even one man in the Knesset. Indeed, the common denominator among all our princes is the inability to simultaneously combine the charisma, vision, courage, and power-hunger which are indispensable for any aspiring national leader. Of course, there's nothing in all this shortage for them to be ashamed of. Most of us would make poor leaders; in fact there's something noble about it.

But should the princes ever wonder where they might have failed most tellingly, it would most commonly be in the realm of vision.

Dayan should have noticed in time that Golda was a disaster; Begin — from his viewpoint — should have known better than to call on us to vote for Netanyahu; Baram should have joined the Jerusalem mayoral race from the outset; Ben-Meir should have known that mixing God and Greater Israel would generate an indigestible potion; and Porush should treat rather than provoke the public's growing anti-hardcore resentment.

Political imagination, wrote Sir Isaiah Berlin shortly after FDR's death, is about "the magical power to transform," a power with which Winston Churchill — son of chancellor of the exchequer Lord Randolph — was less endowed than Benjamin Disraeli, "who in effect conceived that imperialist mystique, that splendid but most un-English vision which, romantic to the point of exoticism, bound its spell on the mind of England for two generations."

In fact, unlike Roosevelt who, "like all great innovators had a half conscious, premonitory awareness of the coming shape of society," his British comrade-in-arms "for all his extrovert air, looks within, and his strongest sense is the sense of the past."

So are Begin's, Porush's, Baram's and the rest of our many princes *de-la-shmatta*; so why can't one of them be at least a fraction of a Churchill?

Of snails and hedgehogs

MICHAEL MARMUR

The State of Israel is crawling with snails and hedgehogs. The liberals among us are snails — when threatened, we recoil into our shells and wait for better times.

To make our distress easier to bear, we think a lot about the interior design of our shells. Occasionally, we may congregate with other snails to engage in some orchestrated melancholy. As soon as our antennae tell us the coast is clear, each of us peers out to see if life can be resumed as normal.

The hedgehogs respond in a different way to a perceived threat. When faced with a challenge to their ineradicable truths, they bristle and wield their spikes. When, for example, a prime minister has the audacity to make a decision of which these hedgehogs disapprove, the threat of a backlash hangs heavy in the air.

It was the late Isaiah Berlin's observation that there are two kinds of people, whom he likened to the fox and the hedgehog. Whereas the fox thinks many small thoughts, the hedgehog has one big idea. This is the difference between pragmatists and idealists, and in Berlin's great essay the distinction seems convincing.

But not here, not in these days of political and cultural turmoil. Liberals like me, committed to old-fashioned principles of tolerance and reconciliation, may think we are as crafty as foxes, but sadly we are often as torpid and insular as snails.

If you want to understand the difference between the hedgehogs and the snails, just look at any local election campaign. Most hedgehogs, proponents of one or other Big Idea, know how to organize, mobilize, and act. Most moderate people — who still constitute a majority in this country — find the local elections mystifying, paralyzing, and dull. In some towns, the campaign is nothing more than a turf war. But in some places, most notably in Jerusalem, the questions at stake are weighty indeed.

Those who vote in the upcoming elections will help determine the governing ethos of the capital. Should it be open and pluralistic? Should modern notions of education and child development be encouraged, or reversed? Should services to Arab and Jew be offered on the basis of common humanity, or according to some sectional preference? Should

women in the city be expected to conform to a 12th-century notion of modesty, or a 20th-century notion of equality?

Such questions are profound, and they help separate the hedgehogs from the snails. Those of a porcine tendency band together to ensure that their Big Idea is well represented at the polls, while the snails tend to withdraw into their shells, bemoaning the hedgehog invasion and staying at home on election day. They often speak with bile and prejudice about those extremists of all stripes with whom they disagree, but they neglect the most basic means of standing up for what they believe. Perhaps it's hard to stand up for something when you're cowering in a shell.

ON THE NATIONAL level as on the local, in the religious and cultural spheres no less than in the political, those who are fervent and emphatic have a disproportionate impact on society at large. The task for moderate and tolerant citizens is to struggle against apathy and despair. Those who

seek to sabotage the workings of democracy and the law must be made aware that they cannot attain their goal, since their path is obstructed by millions of regular citizens who are prepared to come out of their shells and be heard.

Voting is one thing all citizens can do to make sure that their views contribute to something beyond after-dinner conversations. But between elections, there are several more ways that the snails among us can help protect democracy, diversity, and decency.

Every act of community-building is an act of defiance against despair and alienation.

Every moment of learning is a counterbalance to a culture of ignorance.

Every time a stereotype is broken, a connection made, the stranglehold of mutual distrust is loosened. For many, this kind of talk is quaint and antiquated. After all, we are all sophisticated people, and we know that one lone voice counts almost for nothing. We know that if we stay away from the polling booth come election day, nothing will change either way. We tell ourselves that there are great impersonal forces at work which make our personal

efforts irrelevant.

This thinking has helped to create a generation of snails. We know how things ought to be, but we have nothing vested in the business of getting there. The challenge of sovereignty forces us to arrange our lives such that they include some acts, even as infrequent as the casting of a vote, which speak to a reality beyond our immediate home environment.

Vote for something, for anything in which you believe, on election day. Otherwise, our prophecies of doom will fulfill themselves, and we will only have ourselves to blame.

Hedgehogs can strike in an instant. The act of a murderer in killing his own elected prime minister is an infamous example of this long-standing truth.

Progress, on the other hand, moves at a snail's pace. Sometimes it seems that moderation cannot contend with extremism. But I for one am betting on the snails. It may not be an exaggeration to state that they carry on their backs the future of Israel, and with it the very future of Judaism.

The writer, a rabbi, is dean of the Hebrew Union College in Jerusalem.

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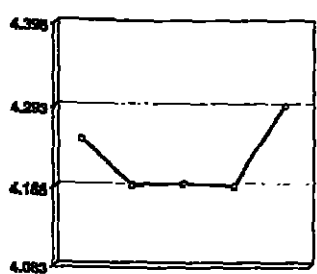
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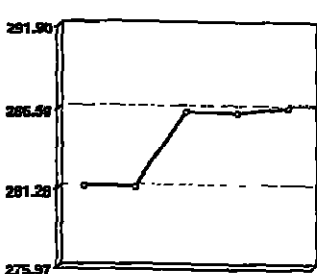
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in brief

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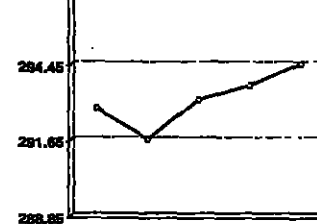


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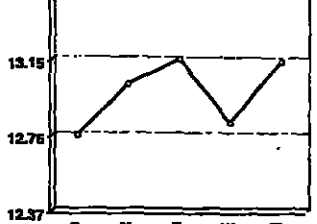
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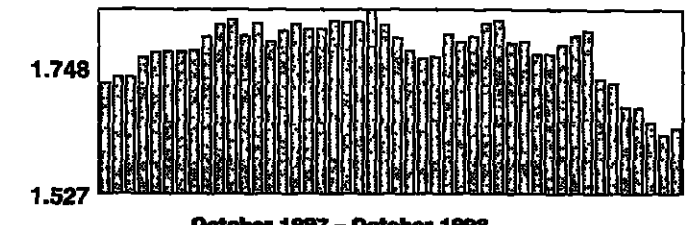


OIL

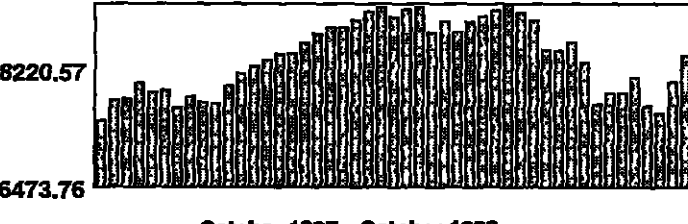
\$ per barrel of Brent crude



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Insurers assault mortgage banks

The Association of Insurers and Brokers in Israel and the Israel Consumer Council have launched a campaign aimed at encouraging the public to avoid buying insurance policies from mortgage banks. The banks often require loan takers to get life and homeowners insurance and offer insurance policies on which they charge a commission.

The association petitioned the High Court of Justice last month, claiming that the activities of mortgage banks violate the law. The mortgage banks denied the accusations, saying that all their activities were approved by the authorities and accused the insurers of using illegal radio commercials.

Dan Gerstenfeld

Tower Semiconductor losses grow

Tower Semiconductor yesterday announced a third-quarter net loss of \$4.9 million, compared with a net profit of \$5.5m. a year earlier. The loss was accompanied with a sharp drop in sales, which fell to \$15.2m. from \$35m. in the third quarter of 1997. During the first nine months of the year, sales fell to \$52.9m., compared with \$94.9m. a year ago, while net loss was \$11.3m. compared with net profit of \$14.8m.

Dan Gerstenfeld

Israeli company to clear mines in Croatia

Maavarim Civil Engineering, a Jerusalem-based company, yesterday announced that it had won a world bank contract to clear land mines in the Republic of Croatia. The company said that it will start by clearing mines from the Sonja railway for a sum of over NIS 1 million.

Maavarim uses detection technologies which were jointly developed with Israel Aircraft Industries and the Sorek Nuclear Research Center.

Dan Gerstenfeld

Jordan firm to ship luggage tax-free to US

A consortium of Jordanian and American companies have launched a firm for producing suitcases that will be exported tax-free to the United States.

Trade and Industry Minister Mohammed Saleh Hourani said Thursday Boscan Co. was set up in an industrial zone in the northern city of Irbid, 180 kilometers north of the Jordanian capital, Amman. He said the \$7 million company will produce leather and polyester suitcases of all sizes. Initial production is projected at 1,000 suitcases a day. The project is a joint venture between the International Company Group, a consortium of private sector Jordanian investment firms, and The Hong Kong-based US Boscan Co., Hourani added.

AP

Cairo bourse chairman resigns amid disputes

By ALISTAIR LYON

CAIRO (Reuters) - Cairo Stock Exchange Chairman Sherif Raafat, appointed in July 1997 to modernize the bourse, resigned yesterday amid reported differences with the government, while citing "family reasons."

Raafat could not immediately be reached for comment on his resignation, but brokers said there had been friction between him and the state Capital Market Authority.

"He was perfect at bringing in up-to-date technology and upgrading the bourse system," said a broker who asked not to be named. "But he was not so good at handling the daily problems of the exchange and the CMA had to intervene on several occasions."

A brief statement from the exchange said Prime Minister Kamal Ganzouri had accepted Raafat's resignation and his departure would take effect on

December 16.

"Sherif Raafat, chairman of the Cairo and Alexandria bourses, delivered his resignation to Prime Minister Kamal Ganzouri, who accepted it for the bourse chairman's family reasons," the statement said.

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'Housing law to cost NIS 10b.'

By DAVID ZEV HARRIS

The newly approved Public Housing Law will cost the government some NIS 10 billion in the coming years, money for which there is no budget, according to the Treasury.

The original estimate given by Prime Minister's Office Director General Moshe Leon put the figure at only NIS 3-4b.

The law, proposed by MK Ran Cohen, (Meretz) entitles 100,000

tenants in public housing to purchase their apartments for heavily subsidized prices. In some cases the discount will be as large as 85 percent of the property's value.

The 1999 state budget, currently being discussed in the Knesset, does not contain any funding for the new law. As a consequence, the Treasury intends to ask the cabinet at an upcoming meeting to add a section to the Budgetary Arrangements Bill delaying the introduction of the new law until 2001.

This design has already been strongly condemned by The Third Way, whose members supported Cohen's bill, despite instructions from the coalition whip's office to vote against the legislative proposal.

The party is already indicating it may not support the government in the Knesset Finance Committee and second and third reading stages, if implementing the Public Housing Law is postponed.

The majority of the NIS 10b. would compensate the govern-

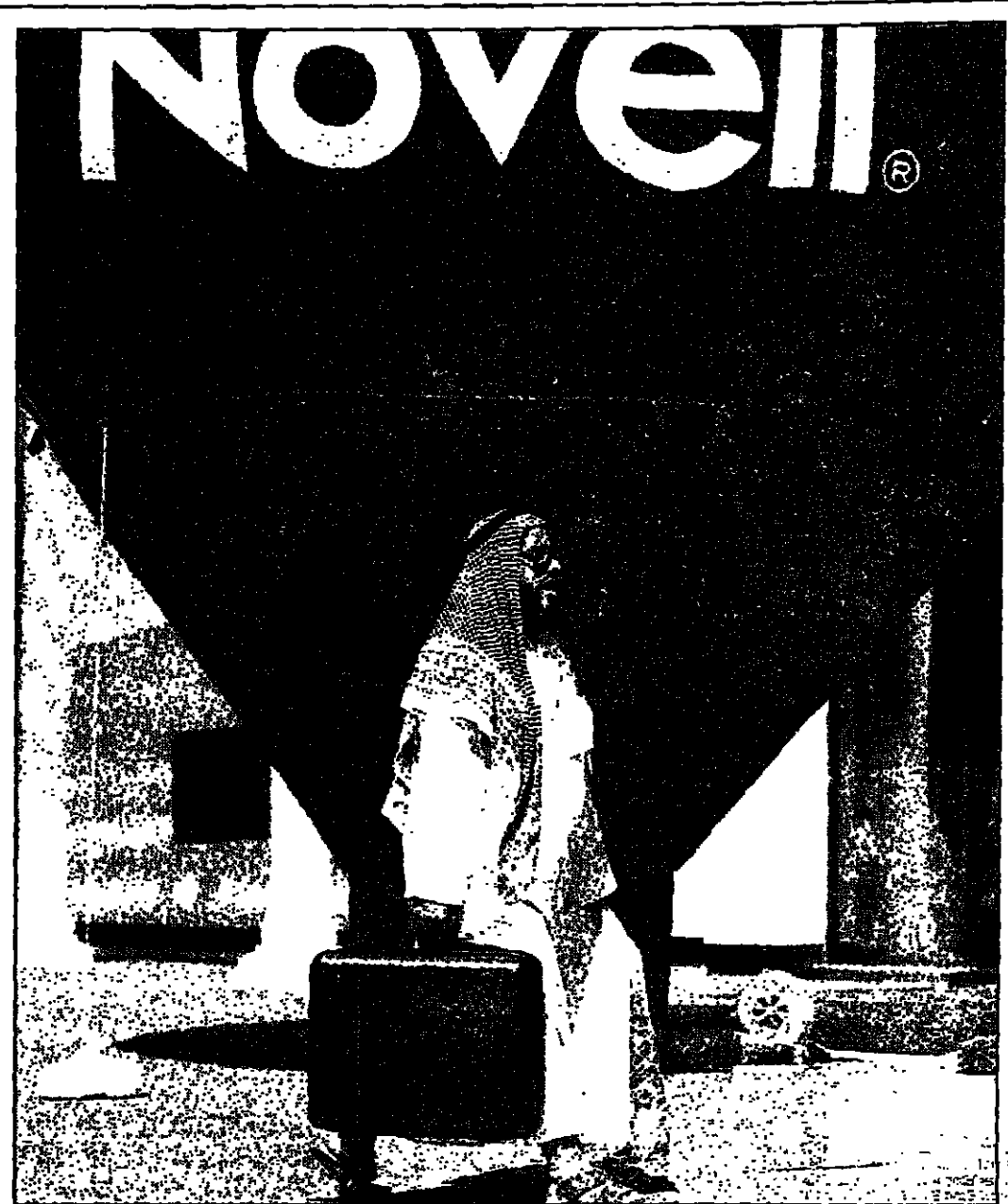
ment agencies, which act as landlords for the 100,000 properties and would have to sell them at discounted prices. The key landlord is the Amigur company of the Jewish Agency.

Meanwhile, Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman came under fire yesterday as the Knesset Finance Committee began discussing the proposals that are contained in next year's State Budget and Budgetary Arrangements bills.

During the meeting, Haim Oron

(Meretz) decried the Treasury's 1999 macroeconomic forecast, describing it as "too optimistic." In his opinion, unemployment will be higher than the predicted 9.3% and economic growth will not reach the Treasury's anticipated 2% figure.

On Sunday, the committee will hear a report on state revenues for 1998 and 1999 before kicking off its ministry-by-ministry budget debate on Monday with an examination of health spending planned for the coming 12 months.



Keeping informed

A visitor passes a balloon advertising software provider Novell yesterday outside an exhibition hall of the Gitex '98 fair at Dubai's World Trade Center. Over 450 exhibitors representing 1,500 companies from 32 countries are participating in the information-technology fair, which runs through Monday.

(AP)

Neeman: No piecemeal passage of tax plan

By Jerusalem Post Staff

The Treasury's tax reform plan will not be presented to the Knesset in piecemeal form but as one comprehensive program, Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman yesterday told the Knesset Finance Committee.

Neeman said there is no point in introducing plans to lower the top tax brackets without explaining how to fund such changes at the same time.

Speculation increased yesterday that Neeman will not introduce his tax reform to the Knesset as long as MKs are discussing the Wye Accord between Israel and the Palestinians. Neeman was said to have made this comment during yesterday's committee meeting, while Treasury spokesman Eli

Yosef denied the reports.

Opposition MKs, led by Avraham Shohat (Labor), left the meeting telling journalists there is insufficient support for Neeman's tax proposals. The problem is not one of finding support for the tax cut, but more for the abolition of tax breaks needed to fund the move, he said.

Neeman's tax reform has two main features. The first is a shift from the existing system's territorial base to a personal definition, meaning that every taxpayer, including wage earners, will file an annual tax report, and that all income, whether earned locally or overseas, will be taxable.

The second is a reduction in income and marginal tax rates to a maximum of 35%, while abolishing a host of tax breaks, ranging from

capital gains to preferred development areas. The country's tax breaks total nearly NIS 20 billion annually, and the plan is believed to be aiming at nearly half that sum.

Neeman has repeatedly stated his plan to have the changes on the statute books before January 1, but ministry officials now say meeting such a schedule is becoming increasingly unlikely.

Neeman yesterday held up a document before the MKs during the closed meeting, stating "the plan is ready," according to Yosef. It has been with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for about a month, but still has to be brought to the cabinet for approval. The recent increased diplomatic activity has meant the cabinet has had less time to discuss non-peace-related issues.

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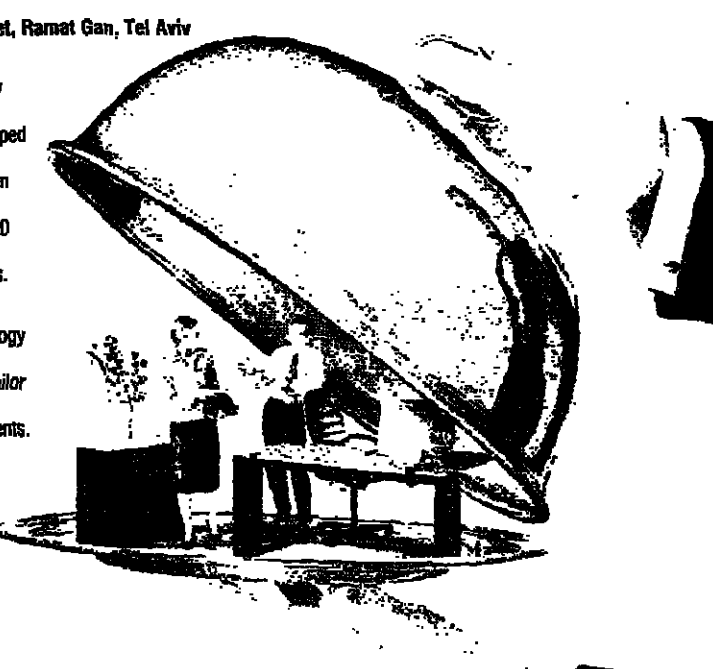
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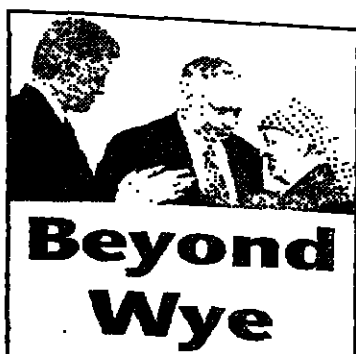
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The timer on early elections ticks on



Beyond Wye

All week, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, amazingly, put on his bravest face, denying that he had all but committed political suicide at Wye Plantation, or placed his government in the direst danger it had ever been in.

But his actions speak otherwise — particularly his hectic series of get-togethers with his own coalition members in a near-desperate effort to prevent his government's imminent downfall.

When he signed the Wye Memorandum, Netanyahu may have lost the support of the Right, and thus — in theory, at least — has also lost his parliamentary majority.

"The Netanyahu government is finished," former prime minister Shimon Peres coolly assessed. "He lost his coalition. He has only two alternatives — new elections or national unity. The latter is best for the nation."

Peres doggedly contends that national unity "remains a viable alternative."

He points out that MK Haim Ramon, who is sponsoring an early-elections bill, now recommends that Labor join the Netanyahu government. Shas leader Aryeh Deri, with a finger in every political pie, even spoke of very recent overtures to bring Labor into the coalition.

Peres's championship of national unity is not new, of course. Only a few months ago the political cauldron bubbled excitedly with rumors of clandestine meetings between those legendary political catalysts — Peres and Ariel Sharon.

The speculation at the time was that a new political axis was being forged, to the annoyance of Netanyahu and Labor Party chairman Ehud Barak. Peres and Sharon were reportedly hatching schemes for a national-unity government, to which Netanyahu and Barak would both be dragged despite their wishes.

This week, those meetings were recalled again. Neither Peres nor Sharon, it was noted, had ever lost their national-unity passion.

At the Likud Central Committee meeting Wednesday night, Sharon extended "a hand to the opposition. Come join forces with us in the great struggles ahead," Peres, in turn, still insists that "only a broad coalition can negotiate the final-status agreement."

In addition, Sharon believes it is a good way to save the vulnerable Netanyahu government, while Peres will have demonstrated his continuing sway in Labor.

NETANYAHU and Barak, however, have more immediate concerns and thus are apparently doing their best to stymie the idea.

Netanyahu can't squander energies on a move that will do in his last-ditch efforts to prevent a right-wing rebellion. This no doubt gave rise to Netanyahu's staunch attack against Barak before the Likud Central Committee.

In danger now is not the Wye Memorandum, which will be approved, but Netanyahu's parliamentary majority. Winning back his own coalition's support is Netanyahu's preferred option; relying on the opposition is risky, as for him its motives must always be suspect.

But in both the Likud and Labor there are persistent predictions that, if all else fails, Sharon may

With the whiff of a spring ballot in the air, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu is struggling to hold his coalition together. Sarah Honi looks at who will back the premier and who will abandon him



(Above) Netanyahu gestures dramatically at the Likud Central Committee on Wednesday (AP); (Inset) The power to decide: the NRP's Hanan Porat (standing) chairs the Knesset Law Committee, which pushed through the early election bills. (Seated from left) Meretz's Yossi Sarid, the Third Way's Alex Lubotsky and Labor's Haggai Merom (Isaac Harari)

make another phone call to Peres. Barak, meanwhile, has all but branded his own party's national-unity advocates turncoats, "who prefer their own petty personal advantage to the good of the movement." After all, the enticing smell of new elections is everywhere.

True, the polls have not been smiling on Barak. Few in his party even bother any more to disguise their disappointment in him and in his failure to capture the electorate's imagination.

But Barak's lack of charisma

"Barak would love to campaign hot on the heels of TV reports showing the IDF withdrawing"

— Likud whip Meir Sheerit

may be offset by a springtime polling date. The final date for this would not be fixed until the third reading of the pending Ramon bill, but it might be as early as mid-March, a date that allows Barak to claim that "we are giving Netanyahu a chance to implement the Wye Memorandum. He will have the few months needed to carry out the pullback. Election day will come afterwards and won't interfere with process."

NOT THAT many people are impressed by Barak's cooperation. "Barak knows he isn't fooling anyone. Even a 10-year-old can see through his transparent ruse," responds coalition whip Meir Sheerit.

"He'd like nothing better than for the campaign to be in full swing before implementation of the Wye agreement is completed. What is peace when compared to improving Barak's electoral prospects?"

"Barak would love to campaign hot on the heels of TV reports showing the IDF withdrawing," Sheerit concludes. The consensus in the Likud is that such pictures can do Netanyahu no good, not even in the mythical political center.

Another advantage for Barak would be the fact that this is the season for the annual budget rite, with its expected scenes of extortion, payoffs, deals and Knesset cliff-hangers — scenes that never boost any prime minister's popularity.

Currency-market instability would make it exceedingly difficult for Netanyahu to suddenly loosen the government's purse strings and engage in "election economics."

All told, Barak couldn't dream of better conditions. For this reason, he can be expected to do all he can to silence the faintest of national unity rumblings.

BUT IF elections in close proximity with the pullback and the budget contortions are good for Barak, they are precisely what Netanyahu must avoid. Thus, tentatious leaks from within the Likud notwithstanding, it is unre-

alistic to expect Netanyahu to initiate early elections himself.

Such a move might come only when all else is lost. For now, Netanyahu is out to win time. That in itself will not ensure his government's survival to the end of its term, but it could markedly improve its chances.

The problem for Netanyahu is that the timer on early elections is already ticking. It was wound up and primed last summer when a smug and semi-dormant coalition failed to prevent the passing, in preliminary reading, of an early elections bill.

Had this not occurred, Netanyahu would have far less to worry about now. Outright no-confidence is a less likely mechanism for doing his government in than this bill, which lets Barak claim that he is generously spreading a safety net to allow implementation of the Wye deal, while at the same time energetically pressing for the earliest possible election date.

Barak maintains there is "no contradiction. These are two separate issues. We can protect the agreement but move for early elections at the same time."

The bottom line is that "there

really is no safety net at all. Its holes are so big that they will not prevent Netanyahu from falling right through and crashing on the hard ground," crows Labor Knesset faction chief Elie Goldschmidt.

FOR THE early elections bills to be adopted — and there are two on the table, one sponsored by Labor's Ramon and Ra'anana Cohen, and the other by Meretz's Haim Oron — they must pass three readings, with a minimum of 61 votes each time. In the bag already are 56 votes — Labor's 34, Meretz's nine, Hadash's five, Geshet's five, Moledet's two and Likud MK Ze'ev Begin.

It is not clear how the Democratic Arab Party will vote and some Likud optimists are not even giving up entirely on Begin.

"He is amenable to persuasion. I doubt that the son of the late Likud leader would want to go down in history as the one who brought down a Likud government, even if its policy is anathema to him," says Health Minister Yehoshua Matza.

"He is a highly intelligent man and he no doubt realizes that there are only two possibilities. Either

Netanyahu will win the early elections and so there would be no change, or a Barak-Sarid alliance would come to power, making things a lot worse," says Matza.

Thus far, however, Begin has not budged.

Another of Netanyahu's implacable in-house foes, however, is having second thoughts about his stand.

It was MK Dan Meridor's maverick support for the bills which put them over the top in July's preliminary reading. It was the first time he had voted against the government.

This week he said he wouldn't do it again because this time "my vote would come against the background of the Wye agreement, which I endorse."

Netanyahu's immediate problem, then, is all those in his coalition who hotly oppose what he brought back from Wye. He will have to appeal to each and every MK — from the Likud's Uzi Landau and David Re'em to Tsomet's Moshe Peled — to at least stay away from the vote on early elections. Desperate overtures will also be made to Moledet and Geshet.

But the most dangerous hotbed of potential rebellion is in the National Religious Party.

Netanyahu might prevail on some of its nine MKs, but settlement leaders Zvi Hendel, Nissan Slomiansky and Hanan Porat will not be easily swayed, if that is even possible.

Netanyahu's worst break is the fact that Porat chairs the Knesset Law Committee.

The early elections bills had been held hostage in his committee for months, and Porat never camouflaged his intentions: If Netanyahu did not buckle under

this will bring the Left to power. Those who hanker for revenge against the Netanyahu sellout should keep in mind that a Left-led government will be a catastrophic alternative to Netanyahu."

This, even though he and Levy are ultra-hawks hardly distinguishable ideologically from Porat. While Netanyahu was negotiating at Wye, all three issued dire warnings that he would have no government if he struck a bargain. Porat, however, remains true to that line.

"Netanyahu failed utterly as the leader of the national camp," he says. "He let down his voters and left them with no representation and no voice. Netanyahu, therefore, must be replaced and we are already preparing primaries to choose an alternative candidate for premier."

THERE are also moves in the far Right to set up a new party — shades of the defunct Tehiya. Geshet MK Michael Kleiner is proposing to unite the many initiatives under one umbrella.

These embryonic parties are cause for severe apprehension in the NRP, which did well in the last elections because its opposition to the previous Labor government won back the trust of its right wing and the settlers. If the NRP is now seen as soft on Netanyahu's sell-out, then it might lose a considerable chunk of its constituency to a host of marginal lists.

At the same time, such lists could cause the downfall of the entire national camp — just as they did in 1992, when the Right actually won more votes, but they were spread among too many different parties, most of which did not pass the electoral threshold.

This is precisely what Netanyahu stressed when he met with Levy earlier in the week. Netanyahu reminded Levy that six years ago it was the far Right's ideological zealots who brought Shamir down (for a lot less than what they now have against Netanyahu) and paved the way for the government which inflicted Oslo on them.

History could be repeating itself and some in the NRP, led by Yehonatan, fear that most Yehonatan this-urged his fiery comrades to "recall that the worst enemy of the good is the absolute good. In the quest for the perfect, which may not be attainable, we can lose everything."

"Our good intentions can lead to calamity. If we don't take a very deep breath and a very hard look at the situation on the ground, rather than conjure images of the ideal we seek, then the Right will be splintered again and the Left will rise to power."

"If the Yossis — Beilin and Sarid — are put in charge of the final-status talks, the settlements' lot will not improve. Perhaps it would be prudent of us to make do with the lesser of the evils and salvage what we can."

Yehonatan's pragmatism, it is judged in the NRP, will probably be backed by half the Knesset faction. But there is no reliable gauge for the mood in the central committee. Much now depends on whether Levy wants to extend the government's life. However, even if he does, and even if he wins the committee over, the story might not end there.

The issue is so emotional that individual MKs may rise up against party discipline, fervently proclaiming their unshakable confidence in winning the premiership for the far Right with a yet unnamed and unchosen third candidate.

"Their problem," observes Yehonatan, wryly, "is that the only potential third candidate who could have made a difference was brilliantly removed from the race by Netanyahu. Ariel Sharon, the only credible challenger, is now Netanyahu's mainstay."

"Kleiner is just not Sharon. If some amongst us fail to realize this, then the national camp is doomed."

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Beyond



Wye

Arafat under fire for corruption, not accord

The demonstrations in Ramallah usually start in the early afternoon. Students leaving school head toward Manara Square and wait along the pedestrian railing underneath banners that trumpet Yasser Arafat. Then the organizers come, wielding walkie-talkies, and give the signal.

Suddenly, hundreds of young Palestinians are marching down Ramallah's main street shouting "Don't challenge the masses. Revolt against corruption. Fatah still has the strength."

Some of the demonstrators are Fatah activists protesting what they say is a campaign by the Palestinian Authority's military intelligence to intimidate the movement, pointing to the arrests of activists and the killing of 18-year-old demonstrator Wasim Tarifi. But most are young people, students. And they are not protesting the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. They are protesting the authoritarian practices of the PA.

"I am not against the peace process," says Jamil Ibrahim, a Fatah activist from Ramallah. "I am against their behavior [in PA security agencies]. We're not talking about the entire intelligence agencies. It's a few people."

In the PA-controlled media, senior officials and their supporters are trumpeting their achievements at the US-sponsored talks at Wye Plantation. Endorsements are rolling in from around the world, but in the West Bank Palestinians are expressing unprecedented dissatisfaction with the PA.

"There are people who work outside the law," says Abdul Jawad Salah, a Palestinian Legislative Council member who in August quit the PA cabinet. "These people don't work for the good of the public. They work to dominate others. They have to pay."

The Fatah campaign, activists pledge, will not stop, once demands are met for the prosecution of those who killed Tarifi.

Four military intelligence members have already been sentenced to jail terms of up to four years for raiding Fatah's Ramallah office, leading to Sunday's violent demonstration in which Tarifi was killed.

"We will work for freedom for all people, not just Fatah," says Amin Makbal, Fatah secretary in Nablus.

MEANWHILE, Palestinian negotiators came home from Wye claiming to have gained everything and lost nothing.

PA minister and negotiator Saeb Erekat says that, despite Israeli demands, the Palestinian National Council will not amend sections of the Palestinian charter that call for the destruction of Israel during a special session to be attended by US President Bill Clinton next month.

"Members of the Palestinian National Council, the Palestinian Legislative Council, the Central Council, women's organizations

"I am not against the peace process. I am against the behavior of the PA security agencies"

- Jamil Ibrahim, a Fatah activist

and trade unions will convene to listen to Clinton, not to vote."

Erekat told PA television on Monday. The Palestinian negotiators also say that they rejected Israeli demands to outlaw Hamas, Islamic Jihad or any other political organization and refused to restrict the activities of opposition groups or mosque imams that preach against Israel.

Mohammed Dahlan, commander of the PA Preventive Security Apparatus in Gaza, says the PA will not confiscate illegal weapons from Palestinians or reduce the number of PA police officers. Instead, he says, some officers might simply be moved to other duties.

"We have no problem providing one list of policemen and another list of policemen who do administrative work and are unarmed," Dahlan said in an interview with the PA daily *Al Ayyam*.

Still, many of the Palestinians seem skeptical of the achievements their leaders are claiming. A poll conducted by the Beit Sahour-based Palestinian Center for Public Opinion, headed by Dr. Nabil Kukali, suggests that Palestinians are in no mood for concessions. The poll reports that while 61 percent of Palestinians oppose amending the charter, only 25.5 percent favor the change.

The Palestinian Authority faces a doubly difficult job these days: not only must it sell the Wye accord, it must also quiet growing unrest. Steve Rodan and Mohammed Najib report



A Palestinian in Ramallah runs past smoke and flames during a street battle fought on Sunday between the Palestinian security forces and Yasser Arafat's political faction, the Fatah. One demonstrator, Wasim Tarifi, nephew of a PA minister, was killed in the clash. (AP)

"There is a decrease in support by all the people for the agreements," Kukali says. "There is also less support for changing the covenant than in the past."

The results of the poll of 370 adults is less clear on the PA performance's at Wye. While 42.5 percent of those surveyed said they support the Israeli-Palestinian accords, 51 percent express less than satisfaction with the performance of the Palestinian negotiators. Slightly less than a third said

they believe the agreement will weaken the status of Arafat while a slightly higher percentage said the PA chairman will be strengthened.

These days in Ramallah, however, few Palestinians talk much about the agreement. They focus on what they term the tyranny of PA security forces, many of whom use their muscle to shake down ordinary people.

With an estimated 80,000 armed men working for Arafat, hiring a gun is easy. West Bank residents

relate stories of Palestinians hiring relatives or friends in the security forces to settle scores or collect debts. Merchants tell of police officers who enter restaurants, order food and refuse to pay; or security agents who demand protection money from businesses.

These officers, Palestinians say, operate with impunity. "This [Tarifi killing] is not an exceptional incident," says Ibrahim Kreisheh, a Fatah leader and former Bir Zeit University student

president, "but a reflection of the way things work inside the PA security establishment."

What Fatah activists are loath to admit is many of its own members carry weapons, and some of them engage in the same type of extortion as PA officers.

Take Ramallah, for instance. PA security officials say Fatah members have tried to replace police in the lower part of the city. As the new security force, Fatah members settle disputes in many of the same ways that officers do: those with more clout with the movement win.

In July, a Palestinian family in neighboring Al-Bireh was nearly driven from its home by Fatah gunmen who wanted a tenant, a member of the movement, to take over the building. It was members of Yasser Arafat's Force 17 praetorian guard who came to the family's aid.

With so many guns around, Palestinians say, virtually every feud threatens to turn into a shoot-out. Take the events that led to Tarifi's death, for instance.

Military intelligence chief Moussa Arafat (nephew of Yasser Arafat) says the dispute with Fatah began when a member of the movement assaulted his officers in downtown Ramallah. Arafat maintains that he chose to turn the other cheek so as to prevent a shoot-out.

But last Saturday afternoon, Fatah militants again attacked Arafat's men, this time from the air-force wing. The gunmen called for help and military intelligence sent a jeep to their rescue. Arafat says that he again refrained from retaliating; instead, he asked Fatah to hand over the attackers.

"They refused," recalled Arafat at a news conference in Gaza. "As a result, I sent a force at 11 at night to arrest the seven persons from Fatah who assaulted our officers. The force arrested four of them while three of them escaped from the office. We followed them and arrested them."

Arafat recalls that he quickly regretted ordering the raid and hours later released the Fatah men. "I am a son of Fatah and I cannot harm it," he says. "I spent 35 years in Fatah and I fought with it and I am one of its members. But it is impossible to have two authorities. The brothers in Fatah are dear. But I want to explain the practices of a group within the organization in lower Ramallah. This group has already kidnapped a p.p.e.d. Palestinian soldier and prevented the military from patrolling in uniform. They organized unofficial armed patrols."

That Sunday afternoon in downtown Ramallah, hundreds of Fatah militants gathered - some of them carrying submachine guns.

At this point, the story gets fuzzy. Arafat maintains his men did not fire toward the demonstrators. Instead, Fatah gunmen fired their weapons in the air. Fatah activists and eyewitnesses said military intelligence officers stood outside their headquarters and fired. Tarifi, who Arafat says was not a Fatah member, was struck by two bullets in the head.

Arafat points out that he joined Fatah in 1965 and is no less a member of the movement than those demonstrators. But, he adds, Fatah does not replace the law.

"I am a son of Fatah and I cannot harm it," he says. "I spent 35 years in Fatah and I fought with it and I am one of its members. But it is impossible to have two authorities. The brothers in Fatah are dear. But I want to explain the practices of a group within the organization in lower Ramallah. This group has already kidnapped a p.p.e.d. Palestinian soldier and prevented the military from patrolling in uniform. They organized unofficial armed patrols."

"These people don't work for the good of the public. They work to dominate others. They have to pay"

- Abdul Jawad Salah, Palestinian legislator

TARIFI'S death has sparked a level of anger rarely seen in Palestinian society. Thousands of people attended Tarifi's funeral, paralyzing Ramallah and chanting slogans that seemed to come straight out of the East Bloc protests in the last years of the Cold War.

Mohammed Muqbil, director of the PA Sports and Youth Ministry, led many of the chants in front of PA police headquarters. The message was direct: "PA, PA, we want an end to torture." "We want freedom," "Abu Amar [Yasser Arafat's nom de guerre], look. We will expose the killings."

"There is a spark that will spread like wildfire," a Fatah leader says. "We have lost patience. The door has opened to investigate the corruption within all security services."

Calling in the CIA

The Wye Memorandum gives the CIA an unprecedented active role in protecting Israel's security. Arie O'Sullivan asks the experts if the US involvement is good or bad

nate terrorist cells," and the other will review the punishment of terrorists, ostensibly to prevent the "revolving door" practice.

Two bilateral US-Palestinian-Israeli committees are to work on curbing proliferation of weapons and explosives in the Palestinian-held areas and monitor incitements. CIA agents here will sit every two weeks in a third bilateral committee with Israeli and Palestinian agents to share intelligence and identify terrorist threats.

The Wye agreement stipulates that full Israel-Palestinian security cooperation will be continuous, intensive and comprehensive. But it doesn't detail a framework for such cooperation.

Nevertheless, Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, seconded by the IDF's planning division and the General Security Service officials who negotiated the deal, insists that the security memorandum provide checks, balances and timetables for progress.

Defense officials maintain that the enhanced CIA involvement was acceptable to all Israeli security agencies as long as they were in addition to and not in place of the direct cooperation between Israel and the Palestinians. Actually, the CIA had virtually mediated this agreement between the Israeli and Palestinian security forces months ago, but it was only after intense pressure at Wye Plantation that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu agreed.

It was Netanyahu's Likud Party which sent representatives to Washington three years ago in the midst of negotiations with Syria. Under the pretense that no one could be responsible for Israel's security except Israel, the Likud officials put pressure on the Americans not to station US troops on the Golan Heights. Ironically, it is now Netanyahu's

government that has appointed US agents to such a pivotal role in Israel's security.

Critics argue that the agreement, which gives the US the sole power to oversee the Palestinian crackdown on terrorism, means that Israel has forfeited the right to verify Palestinian claims that they have eliminated terrorist cells or arrested and prosecuted Israel's enemies. The critics say this is a blow to Israel's sovereignty.

"[The US-Palestinian committees] are the worst items in the

"For the first time in 50 years we have agreed that we shall be totally out of the process of dealing with security problems. It's a horrible mistake"

- Shlomo Gazit, retired general

Wye River agreement," said Maj. Gen. (ret.) Shlomo Gazit, a former director of IDF intelligence. "For the first time in 50 years we have agreed that we shall be totally out of the process of dealing with security problems. Not in my wildest dreams did I envision a third party, without Israel's presence, saying we have discussed it and your complaint was right," Gazit said. "It's a horrible mistake and contrary to our long experience."

In August 1970, Israel had a hellish time trying to convince the Americans that Egypt had violated a cease-fire agreement by moving SAM-3 missiles onto the Suez Canal.

"The Americans didn't want to know about it. They were afraid of having to make a decision and we had enormous difficulties in convincing them," Gazit said, adding that this scenario could recur.

IN Washington, many are questioning the new center-stage role of the government entity that previously shunned the limelight. In Tel Aviv, defense officials are trying to convince themselves that they had no choice, arguing that the gentlemen in the trenches are too well house-trained to let disputes over the Palestinians harm a decades-old special relationship.

"The involvement of the CIA will influence the activities of the Palestinians," said one senior General Security Service (GSS) official who spoke on condition of anonymity. "Let me refrain from speaking of our relationship with our CIA colleagues. For the moment it [the agreement] won't restrict our actions."

Heller of the Jaffee Center agrees that the CIA's involvement will spur the Palestinians, making it harder for them to ignore complaints of noncompliance. He also noted that intimate American involvement makes it more difficult for Israel to use a "semicredible pretext" to halt the peace process since US interests are also at stake.

But David Kimche, a former senior member of the Mossad, said the arrangement, although uncomfortable, was the only way to progress. "Because of a complete loss of confidence between the two sides, the Palestinians wouldn't have accepted a deal if we were to

decide whether they were behaving or not," Kimche said.

Still he doesn't dismiss the fact that tensions with Washington will arise.

"If they [the CIA] decide that we have been remiss in what we have been doing and we don't accept it, or if the Palestinians have been remiss and they [the CIA] don't accept that then it creates tension between us," Kimche said.

Still, Kimche said that the CIA's role as a more public player in the region fits in with the spy agency's war against terrorism.

"It is the changing face of the CIA. They are coming out in the open. They are doing more political things and not truly intelligence actions," Kimche said.

Not only that, but the Wye Agreement paves the way for cozy relations between the US and the Palestinians.

Yossi Ginosar, former senior GSS official, said the heavy involvement of the CIA is a "step up in the coordination between the United States and the Palestinians."

"I'd say the CIA has been called on to be a sheriff in the Wild West," Ginosar said on Israel Radio.

US SENATOR Richard Shelby, who heads the Select Committee on Intelligence, said earlier this week he is concerned about having the CIA monitor Palestinian efforts against terrorism.

"What is the role of the CIA? Is it to enforce a policy? Is it to be an arbitrator? Is it to be bodyguards? I think not," Shelby said in a television interview.

Shelby also questioned the wisdom of putting the CIA in a position where it could be forced to take sides in any dispute. Others fear that the CIA itself may be targeted and that Americans could now be exposed to greater threats of terrorism.

The CIA has a long record of involvement in overseeing the implementation of political accords. It helped verify the US-Soviet arms-control pacts, and eased tensions between India and Pakistan.

The CIA was also directly involved in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations for the withdrawal of the Palestine Liberation Organization from Beirut in 1982. And since the Mideast peace process nearly collapsed following the September 1996 Western Wall tunnel riots, the CIA has played an increasing role as medi-

ator. Israeli defense officials said they expect the CIA to increase the number of operatives in the region due to the Wye agreement.

But even the CIA itself seems uneasy about the new arrangements. Agency director George Tenet took the unusual step of publishing an op-ed piece in *The New York Times* to insist that there is nothing new in the CIA's role vis-a-vis Israel and the Palestinians.

"What is slightly unusual in the current case is that the agency's role has become widely publicized," he wrote. Claiming to "set the record straight," Tenet wrote that CIA agents would not be involved in any security operations on the ground or serve as border guards or bodyguards. CIA officers will not arrest or interrogate anyone, Tenet claimed.

"The CIA is not making policy but helping carry it out," Tenet wrote.

Tenet has already traveled to Israel and the Palestinian territories four times, and the agency reportedly maintains offices in the West Bank cities of Hebron, Ramallah and Nablus, as well as one in the Gaza Strip.

Even with more CIA agents on the ground and a detailed agreement on how to provide Israel with the security it craves, General Gazit believes the Wye Agreement needs to be put into perspective.

"We are not dealing with existential problems, just terrorist activity," he said. "All together this agreement is dealing with the technicalities of an interim agreement."

RISKS of friction with the US notwithstanding, Heller believes that the CIA arbitration is not the Achilles' heel of the agreement.

"The security cooperation will work or will not work primarily as a result of the political relationship. The real minefields are the political issues," Heller said.

Even senior members of the Defense Ministry say that the goal of the Wye Memorandum is nothing more than a way to get past the interim stage and on to the more formidable decisions that must be made in permanent peace arrangements with the Palestinians like the status of Jerusalem, Palestinian refugees and water rights.

"It is a good agreement whose true test will be seen when each side must implement it. It is good for progress, nothing more," said one senior defense official.

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سكرا من الاصل

Withdrawal syndrome in Beit El

Residents of this settlement feel concerned and abandoned following the Wye agreement. But they are not despondent, **Herb Keinon** reports



Beit El resident Haim Silberstein: 'We are right on the border of Ramallah, adjacent to a hostile refugee camp, and soon will become almost totally isolated.'

A signed portrait of Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu hangs in the Beit El Yeshiva office of Yoel Tzur, one of the directors of both the yeshiva and Arutz 7.

The only other portrait on the walls is a picture of Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, the spiritual father of Gush Emunim. Tzur, whose wife Etta and 12-year-old son Ephraim were gunned down by terrorists near Beit El in December 1996, retains perfect faith in the teachings of Gush Emunim.

But in Netanyahu, he has lost all trust. "People here are very calm," he says, speaking by phone to someone trying to set up a meeting for him and Netanyahu's chief-of-staff, Uri Elitzur.

"They look at this agreement and wonder how any Jew could have signed it," Tzur, for one, cannot fathom the logic. "This agreement is suicide," he declares. "Logic cannot absorb how a prime minister could do something like that, give up parts of Eretz Yisrael at this bargain-basement price."

The mood in Beit El, a settlement of some 450 families about 20 minutes north of Jerusalem by car (two minutes north of Ramallah), was predictably concerned this week, following the signing of the Wye Memorandum.

Concerned, but not despairing; worried but not despondent.

Beit El considered one of the hard-core ideological settlements, is not easily bent toward despair.

Not only have Beit El residents faced the worst of the intifada, but since the signing of the Oslo agreement, they have buried five of their own who have been killed by terrorists: Haim Mizrahi, Ohad Bachrach, Etta and Ephraim Tzur and David Boim.

WHEN THE going there gets rough, the reflexive response seems to be to build thicker fortifications of faith. Faith in God, who they are convinced wants them where they are, and in the people of Israel, who they believe are essentially sensible, and would back them if only the Truth was explained to them.

The Wye agreements, on the face of it, have put the redemptive scenarios that attracted people to Beit El on hold. How can one believe in the redemptive power of a return of the Jewish people to all the land of Israel, when a good chunk of the Land of Israel is being given to the Palestinian people?

Yet despite Wye, despite an agreement that will eventually turn 40 percent of Judea and Samaria into the hands of the Palestinians, Tzur continues to declaim classic Gush Emunim philosophy. Almost as if nothing has changed.

"What Netanyahu should do is stand in front of Clinton and the Americans and say it is written in our Torah that the land belongs to us, and we will not give back one grain of Eretz Yisrael," says Tzur, who has seven children.

Aware that people will ask, "Then what do you do, then how do you stand up to the rest of the world?" Tzur raises his voice. "What do you do when a retarded child is born, and you go to all the doctors and they say it is impossible to solve the problem?"

"Do you go home, open a trash bag and put him in it?" Tzur asks. "No, you live with the problem, and if there is no solution, there is no solution."

"The settlement enterprise has failed to convince the country of the need to hold on to the territories because it has focused on security and strategic arguments," says Tzur, who has lived in Beit El since its founding 21 years ago.

"They did not try to sell Eretz Yisrael on a spiritual, ideological level. But always on a pragmatic, security level. These arguments are good up to a certain point, then you have to say, stop driving us nuts with security issues, this land belongs to the Jewish people," adds Tzur.

Security arguments change as circumstances change, he argues, whereas a divine promise is eternal.

"The nation is wishy-washy," Tzur says, when asked if he thinks the country will be willing to sacrifice lives for this divine promise. "Go to the best public-relations firm in the land, say this is the message we want to get across, this is our goal. Put down \$100 million, and begin to let that message flow out to the people."

He is convinced they will buy it. "True leaders do not look at the nation, see where the nation wants to go, and follow the people," Tzur says. "A true leader says, 'This is my goal, follow me.' This is what Ariel Sharon introduced into the army."

And now, he is reminded, Sharon has tacitly placed his stamp of approval on the Wye Memorandum. Since Yarmut (when Sharon was defense minister and evacuated the settlement), I have said that Sharon is the most dangerous person for the people of Israel. With the same strength and determination that he can build, he can also destroy," Tzur says.

"He needs one thing, honor. Give him honor, and he will give away Tel Aviv, and explain that from a security point of view, you are bet-

"Give Ariel Sharon honor, and he will give away Tel Aviv and explain that from a security point of view you are better off without it"

—Yeshiva director Yoel Tzur

ter off without it," he says. According to Tzur, the government must be toppled. "Those who cooked this up should be forced to eat it." He bristles when asked about the alternative, saying that man must do what he must do, and God will dispose of matters as He sees fit.

Chanie Luz, a mother of four who writes for the National Religious Party daily *Hatzofeh* and is studying for a Master's degree in communications at the Hebrew University, rejects the conventional wisdom that an alternative candidate from the Right would have little chance of winning an election.

"Despair is a sin," she says. "Some on the Right have fallen into despair, thinking that if Netanyahu



The town of Ramallah looms behind Miriam Shurak of Beit El. There was worry but not despair this week in the settlement of 450 families. (Photos: Ariel Jerolimski)

and Sharon have been trapped, there is no chance. But we need to take the negative feelings and do a positive act to develop an infrastructure that will bring about a leadership with the spine to pull the nation behind it, not be dragged behind the nation."

Luz insists that she is not hiding her head in the sand, ignoring the political realities of today. "The most unrealistic scenarios are the ones that become real," says Luz.

who has lived in Beit El for six years. "Not too long ago Yossi Sarid was talking about the illusions the religious had of massive immigration at a time where there was massive emigration."

"In 1971, a leading political scientist wrote that it does not seem possible in the foreseeable future for Mapai to lose control of the government. And in 1992, the idea of a Palestinian state seemed very far away. He who judges reality solely

by what is happening today and tomorrow, does not understand this country," Luz says. Luz, like Tzur, is convinced that if matters were just packaged differently, correctly,

"I want to stay here and am willing to undergo many difficulties to do so, but I am not a Masada Jew"

—Beit El resident Haim Silberstein

the majority of the nation would follow the ideological Right, and recognize the folly of agreements with the Palestinians.

In terms of day-to-day life, says Haim Silberstein, a father of twins who has lived in the settlement for 12 years, the recent "folly" with the Palestinians has palpably increased the level of fear and anxiety in Beit El.

"We are right on the border of Ramallah, adjacent to a hostile refugee camp, Jelazoun, and soon will become almost totally isolated."

ed," says Silberstein, executive director of the Beit Orot Yeshiva on Jerusalem's Mount of Olives.

"Up to now they [the Palestinians] were the enclave, and we surrounded them. Now the feeling is exactly the opposite, that we are the island, and they surround us," he says.

According to Silberstein, "it is clear that, as happened in Hebron when the Jewish enclave was surrounded by Palestinian areas, the amount of violence and terrorism against Beit El residents will increase significantly. Not only because the settlements constitute a national problem for the Palestinians, but because Beit El is blocking the expansion of Ramallah northward."

Needless to say, Silberstein has no confidence that the Palestinians will carry out the security end of the Wye Memorandum. As to whether he would stay in Beit El if the settlement ever came under Palestinian sovereignty — if he would be willing to live in Eretz Yisrael even if that meant not longer being a part of the State of Israel — Silberstein refers to a conversation with Beit El rabbi Shlomo Aviner a few years ago.

"The question then," Silberstein remembers, "was to what extent are we obligated to sacrifice ourselves for Eretz Yisrael. He said that when a significant number of people, I think it was 10 percent, are injured or killed as a result of being there or if it seems imminent that this would happen, then there would be no halachic imperative to remain."

"That is my feeling," Silberstein says. "I want to stay here, and am willing to undergo many difficulties to do so. But I am not a Masada Jew. I believe that what goes around comes around, and the land will be reclaimed and redeemed."

"However, there could be circumstances that are incredibly unbearable, and if in those circumstances there is a rabbinical call for Jews to leave the settlements, I would not, under such circumstances, go beyond what the rabbis advise," he says.

As the level of violence increases, Silberstein says he is concerned about what Jewish extremists may do. "My fear is that these people are going to carry out an act, whether [through] personal vigilantes against innocent Arabs, or attempts to injure public figures."

"Not only is that immoral and illegal, but it would also damage any goodwill we have left among the general population, and damage our chances of achieving some of our objectives," he adds.

These extreme elements, who Silberstein says do not live in Beit El, must be told unequivocally that the Torah forbids this type of behavior, and should be ostracized from the religious Zionist camp, he says.

"We must make them feel socially unacceptable by not allowing them to feel comfortable in expressing those views, by rejecting them, ostracizing them, and — if need be — not allowing them into our communities."

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Binyamin Netanyahu's insistence on trying to link the Wye signing to the release of Jonathan Pollard let loose some strong emotions in Washington, Hillel Kuttler writes



Netanyahu with Clinton in Maryland: His gambit was either a show of toughness or a gross error of judgment, according to one Administration official. (AP)

Neither administration officials, members of Congress nor outside analysts interviewed believe that the premier's raising Pollard's profile as he did will cause even short-term damage to US-Israeli or Clinton-Netanyahu relations. Nor can they envision any conceivable fallout on the CIA's ability to fairly monitor the security aspects of the Wye accord, despite the agency's known opposition to

Sarloff agreed. "I doubt very much that there will be lasting residue about this because when Clinton and Netanyahu look at each other, they both look at remarkably gifted politicians in all senses of that word, which means you go for everything you can get until you

"I think it was a tactical mistake by Netanyahu to introduce this as part of the Israeli-Palestinian nego-

In a city where "politics makes

A high-contrast, black and white portrait of a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a light-colored shirt. The image is heavily stylized with a grainy, high-contrast effect, similar to a photocopy or a high-threshold filter. The man has dark hair, a full beard, and is wearing round-rimmed glasses. He is looking slightly to the left of the camera. The background is dark and indistinct. The overall aesthetic is gritty and graphic.

Pollard in prison: His crime hit close to home for many American Jews, angry at how the actions of one of their own might call into question their loyalty to the US.

AS IT happened, the Conference of Presidents of Major American

Thirteen years later, as talks at Wye stretched on last Friday morning, Jewish organizations were inundated with phone calls, more wondering about the accord's being held in abeyance than about Pollard's fate. By the time ambassador to the U.S. Zalman Shoval

"If the agreement had been derailed by Pollard, we might be having a very different discussion right now. Pollard certainly is a human-interest story but the Wye agreement relates to the future of the Middle East peace process, Israel's security. You really can't compare the two."

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Then and now: Rabin depicted in a keffiyas as 'Traitor of the Year' at a Women in Green protest in May, 1994. (Right) Demonstrators, some chanting 'Bibi is a Traitor' gather outside Netanyahu's residence on Monday and display a poster in which the prime minister is shaking Arafat's blood-smeared hands.

More writing on the wall?

As incitement against Binyamin Netanyahu heats up in wake of the Wye Memorandum, Larry Derfner asks whether Israel should brace itself for the possibility of another political assassination

It almost seems too pat: On the eve of the third anniversary of the Rabin assassination, right-wing extremists are again screaming "traitor" at a prime minister who trades land for peace.

The funeral of a Kiryat Arba resident killed by a Hamas terrorist turns into a political rally in which rabbis, Kach leaders and MKs, ostensibly delivering eulogies, blame the government for the murder. Outside their Prime Minister's Residence, a few teenagers in knitted kipot are heard calling for the PM's death.

A new poster is on the streets: The prime minister and Yasser Arafat are shaking each other's blood-smeared hands.

Is this the writing on the wall for Binyamin Netanyahu, the same writing that went unread when it appeared for Yitzhak Rabin? The answer is not so pat.

Prof. Ehud Sprinzak, a Hebrew University expert on right-wing extremism, maintained that the threat of assassination is nowhere near what it was during Rabin's time, because the decisive factor is missing: runaway terror.

"Terror was the major factor in radicalizing the opposition - not the issue of the Land of Israel or the settlements," said Sprinzak. "It was the bus bombings that raised the public's blood pressure so high, that put hundreds of thousands of protesters into the street, and that fostered the rage, hatred and desperation that culminated in Rabin's murder," Sprinzak said.

Din rodef u-din moser, the halachic death sentences cited by Yigal Amir as his justification for assassinating Rabin, were based mainly on the terror killings of Jews, not the handing over of parts of the Land of Israel, Sprinzak maintained.

Israeli society as a whole is less tolerant of political violence, added Prof. Ephraim Yuchtman-Ya'ar, head of Tel Aviv University's Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research. The center's polls showed that public support for the use of violence to achieve political goals stood at 13% on the eve of the assassination, then fell to 4-5% immediately afterward - and stayed down at that level ever since, said Yuchtman-Ya'ar.

ALL THIS is Israel's assassination index at the macro level - a reading of the broad social environment, which offers reason for encouragement. But then there is

the micro level - the potential assassins and their supporters, that tiny circle of zealots, invariably religious, who listen to different voices than do the rest of society.

There cannot be an assassination without an assassin, and the pool of potential political murderers is always going to be minuscule. The question is: Have they moderated their ways along with Israeli society as a whole, or are they just as volatile - or even more volatile - than they were on the eve of the Rabin assassination? Is the Wye Plantation agreement enough to set one of them off?

A source in the intelligence community contended that the potential killers are as ready to strike as ever. "The political reality has not changed - all that's changed is the percentage of land being given up. As soon as there is a conflict over the Land of Israel, and the extremists feel their red line has been crossed, then there is enough motivation for a political murder to occur," the source maintained.

While Israeli society may have learned one clear lesson from the Rabin assassination - that it must keep a safer distance from inflammatory political expressions and take threats of political violence much more seriously - the hardcore extremists may have learned a very different lesson: that assassination works.

"In a way it can be said that Yigal Amir succeeded, at least in the short term. He stopped the advance of the peace process for a few years," the source argued, pointing out that Rabin's murder led to the election of Netanyahu and the effective freeze of the Oslo process, until a week ago.

This view is disputed by those who say Netanyahu was elected not because of the Rabin assassination, but rather despite it, noting that Netanyahu plummeted in the polls after the murder, and eventually won because of the terror bombings that occurred in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Ashkelon three months before the election.

But it's impossible to know what

sort of logic a violent zealot might be following. One thing, though, is certain: It no longer requires such a leap of the imagination for a Jew to conceive of assassinating an Israeli prime minister. The precedent exists, and anybody thinking along those lines can now draw courage from Yigal Amir's example.

ONE OTHER condition has changed since the Rabin assassination: the prime minister giving

"Israeli society as a whole is less tolerant of political violence"

—Professor Ephraim Yuchtman-Ya'ar

up land to the Palestinians today is not a man of the Left, but of the Right. The extreme Right is where the threat of assassination emanates. The extreme Right, especially in the settlements and Jerusalem, provided Netanyahu with many of the most enthusiastic, tireless volunteers for his election campaign.

Is this likely to increase their anger at Netanyahu, because they feel duped, betrayed by their own flesh and blood, as it were? Or are they likely to be more forgiving because they see Netanyahu as someone who gives up land unwillingly, out of weakness, rather than out of "malice" toward everything Jewish, as they believed Rabin was doing?

Sprinzak insisted that the far Right never had a familial feeling for Netanyahu and therefore are not feeling as deeply betrayed as it might seem. "These people never really saw Netanyahu as one of their own. They always saw him as an opportunist, and their attitude towards him was one of 'respect him but suspect him.'"

Yuchtman-Ya'ar, however, said

Netanyahu's right-wing credentials are long-established, so the extremist, violent Right does see him as one of theirs.

"They had high hopes and dashed expectations with Netanyahu, which they never had with Rabin," he said.

Arguing further against the likelihood of assassination, Sprinzak pointed out that Netanyahu's government, unlike Rabin's, does not stand on the support of Arab MKs, so it can't be accused of placing the Jewish state in the hands of the Arab "enemy."

Also, the Wye Agreement is supported overwhelmingly by the public and in the Knesset, so extremist rightwingers cannot act in the faith, which they had during Rabin's regime, that they "have at least half of the people behind them," Sprinzak noted.

A key element in the assassination picture is the behavior of the spiritual leaders of the religious Right. "These rabbis are the only people with influence over the extremists," said the intelligence source.

In their eulogies at Tuesday's funeral of Kiryat Arba resident Danny Vargas, who was murdered by a Hamas terrorist, Hebron Rabbi Moshe Levinger and Kiryat Arba rabbi Eliezer Waldman and Dov Lior blamed the government for the murder. Levinger is under police investigation for suspicion of incitement.

"They haven't changed," the intelligence source said.

YET AT the same time, Rabbi

Haim Druckman is speaking publicly against "crossing red lines," and other national religious rabbis are also counseling caution. Ina Friedman, who, with Michael Karpin, co-authored the recently published book, *Murder in the Name of God: The Plot to Kill Yitzhak Rabin*, said Druckman's words were "encouraging." She also said it was important that National Religious Party MK Hanan Porat had called on former chief rabbi Avraham Shapira and Mordechai Eliahu, who are the ultimate spiritual leaders for many on the religious Right, to condemn incitement.

"Thank God these things are happening," Friedman said. She added, however: "If you ask me whether the notion of assassination as a legitimate political tool has lost its sway in the circles where it held sway before Rabin's murder, then my answer is, I don't know."

While Sprinzak noted that there is "no right-wing mobilization, no talk of *din rodef* - only frustration" in the wake of the Wye Memorandum, Friedman pointed out that the opposition to Wye had just begun. "The run-up to the Rabin murder took two years, starting with the signing of the Oslo Accords," she said.

BUT EVEN if political conditions are ripe for an assassination, and even if there is someone ready to pull the trigger, the security forces out to stop him are sadder but wiser than they were three years ago.

The General Security Service was widely criticized for laxity in guarding Rabin, and Netanyahu is much more closely protected.

Even though the Prime Minister's Office denied reports that Netanyahu was going to keep a lower public profile because of the danger of an assassination attempt, one only



The phalanx of bodyguards surrounding Netanyahu would give any would-be assassin a much harder time approaching the prime minister than Yigal Amir had.

has to look at the phalanx of today's would-be assassin would have a much harder time of it wherever he goes to know that than did Yigal Amir.

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Ministry of Science

GRANTING OF FUNDS FROM THE 1999 BUDGET YEAR

The Ministry of Science announces that in accordance with the regulations set forth in Para. 3a (5) of the Basic Budget Law 1985, requests for financial support from the 1999 Ministry budget can be submitted, subject to the approval of the Budget Law.

Funds will be granted in accordance with criteria for granting funds by the Ministry published in the *Yalut Hapirsumim* 1998, p. 3002, on April 20, 1998, the main points of which are:

1. A request for support by a public institution must be submitted in accordance with "the procedure for submitting requests for support from the state budget in public institutions and their consideration," published in the *Yalut Hapirsumim* No. 4241 of August 21, 1994. The Ministry Support Committee will consider the requests according to the principles of reasonableness and equality between recipients of the various grants, on the basis of professional criteria and with the aim of promoting science and technology in Israel.
2. The Committee will decide on the granting of support for public institutions, whose main pursuits are teaching, research and development - with the exception of grants and support on subjects currently being taught or researched in higher institutions of learning - activities for promoting the scientific and technological training of youth and adults and deepening their awareness and proficiency in these fields, organizing national and multi-national scientific conferences, publishing professional and scientific works, developing international scientific ties, and coordinating and disseminating of scientific and technological information.

A copy of the criteria and application forms for requesting support can be obtained at the Secretariat of the Support Committee, Ministry of Science, Building 3, Kiryat Hamizrahi, P.O.B. 18195, Jerusalem 91181, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Tel. 02-541-1121, Fax. 02-532-3497. The criteria and the forms can also be downloaded from the Ministry of Science internet site: www.most.gov.il

Applicants should indicate whether their requests for support are for scientific conferences, for which a special form is available.

Completed application forms, with all enclosures, should be submitted to the Secretariat of the Support Committee, Ministry of Science, no later than December 10, 1998. Applications submitted after this date will not be considered unless funds are still available after the study of valid applications for the same field have been completed.

Applicants should note the correct procedures for submitting requests, accompanying documents, and the information and data to be submitted with the application. Only applications correctly filled out and submitted with the necessary documentation, as stated above, will be considered by the support committee.

Silvan Shalom
Minister of Science

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Local issues vs. party loyalty

Once upon a time, municipal election results translated easily to the national level -- but no more, writes Allison Kaplan Sommer



On the evening of November 10, as the results of the municipal elections begin to trickle in, political analysts and pundits will inevitably interpret local voting patterns as a public referendum on national issues.

One by one, they will examine the showings of major parties in various cities, and thus decide whether the public supports the agreement reached by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at Wye Plantation. Then, they will start reading the election returns as tea leaves, to predict the results of the next national elections -- whenever such elections take place.

While indulging in such interpretations is irresistible -- not to mention the force of habit for radio and television's talking heads -- those who read the municipal political map on a regular basis are unanimous in stating that these analyses have little to do with the realities of local Israeli politics in the 1990s.

In a process that is nearly two decades old, they say, local elections in Israel have gradually become less about what is going on nationally and increasingly about what local elections should reflect -- what is going on locally.

ONCE upon a time, in the first three decades of Israel's national life, loyal foot soldiers across the country dutifully campaigned and cast their ballots the national party they supported -- Labor or Likud.

In those days, interpreting local election results was straightforward, because they did have national implications. All a political observer had to do was count pre-

cisely how many Likud mayors gained or lost their seats and how many Labor mayors did the same: a simple equation that could gauge the strength or weakness of a party on a national basis.

"People were once very, very loyal to their parties. More than 70 percent of voters in the 1950s and '60s voted for their national party in whatever possible situation," says Prof. Avraham Diskin of the Hebrew University's Political Science Department. "But that is no longer true. Today, on a municipal level, anything can happen politically."

The sea change began in 1978, when, for the first time, the votes for mayor and for the local council were separated. Personally popular mayoral candidates began to realize that if they divorced themselves from their parties, they would be able to retain their old supporters, while at the same time draw votes from across party lines.

Although such candidates were ostensibly independent, they, at least at first, still relied heavily on party support and identification; Jerusalem mayor Teddy Kollek, for example, one of the pioneers of the independent candidacy, had the solid backing of the Labor Party.

But as time goes on, mayors are drifting further and further away from party structures and party dictates. As a result, the local branches of both the Likud and Labor have become weaker.

"As local elections are becoming more and more local and less and less national, a vote for your mayor means you support the current municipal government and its policies. When they go to vote, people are asking what their municipal authorities have done for them lately, and whether the various candidates running for mayor or city council are clean or corrupt," says the Hebrew University's Dr. Reuven Hazan.

Hazan observes that to a large extent, the change is generational. "While many of the older people are loyal to their national parties, the younger people are focusing



The art of elections: Jerusalem municipality candidate Rafi Peled displays the statue he created from recycled campaign posters.

Guide for the perplexed

Voters will cast ballots on November 10 in 161 municipalities across the country.

There is a total of 1,700 lists running for spots on councils. Tel Aviv claims the largest number of lists, 27.

In order to vote one must be an Israeli citizen and a resident of the city.

There are some locations where elections are not being held on this date for various reasons. Twelve municipalities only came into existence after 1996 and are not yet due for local elections.

Some municipalities, including Bnei Brak, had been in financial difficulties and therefore had special supervised elections two years ago. In Kiryat Shmona, the resignation of the mayor led to elections taking place earlier in the year.

Regional-council elections do not take place until March. In the last round of municipal elections, voter turnout was 56 percent. This falls significantly below the 80 percent turnout in national elections.

-A.K.S.

on issues of the environment, on construction, on the cleanliness of their city. They have very different concerns."

AS a result, the success of a candidate is increasingly linked to how well a city, town, or regional council is being run.

Not surprisingly, in cities like Karmiel and Ra'anana where the schools are perceived as satisfactory, garbage is collected on a regular basis, and the city is green and attractive, the incumbent mayors are running strong.

In municipalities perceived as being in a state of disarray -- Tiberias, for example -- incumbents are facing greater challenges, and in some cases, have chosen to step down and not run at all.

To be sure, the local infrastructure of the major parties has not totally disappeared. When a new local politician enters the scene, he is interested in the financial assistance and manpower that a major party can provide.

And, as Hazan points out, party loyalty remains among senior citizens -- an important factor when every vote counts.

But generally, when party labels are used by mayoral candidates, they serve as a springboard and are then discarded.

"What you see is many first-time candidates being elected in a city, running under a party label," observes Hazan. "But the next time, running as a popular incumbent, he will run away from his party -- he no longer needs the support and the help."

The fact that so many strong incumbent mayoral candidates are so quick to shed their affiliation and run as independent candidates -- atop lists that are loyal to them personally, comprised of representatives of many parties, or people who have previously not been involved in politics -- further weakens the party on a local level.

"The longer we have had direct election of mayors, the less important party organizations have become -- they are nearly utterly destroyed as organizations. If you compare what exists today to what existed even a decade ago, you just don't see the volunteers, the posters, the amount of activity that you used to have," notes Hazan.

BUT JUST because the large party organizations are weaker, does not mean that national issues have completely disappeared in the local races.

For example, in politically volatile and right-leaning Jerusalem, Ehud Olmert's background as a senior Likud figure is an advantage and clearly plays a role in his frontrunner status, even though he is not officially a Likud candidate.

But the Jerusalem race this year is also a classic example of party discipline breaking down -- as Labor infighting drove some of the party's leading activists away from the party's candidate, Shimon Shetret, into Olmert's camp, something that would have been unthinkable just a few years ago.

The new realities of local politics have caused the position of mayor to be a less attractive proposition for politicians with national aspirations, even in the major cities.

While ex-Likud ministers Olmert and Roni Milo snapped up the mayoralties of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv in the previous round of municipal elections, it was nearly impossible for the parties to round up candidates of similar stature for this year's race. Both Netanyahu and Labor Party leader Ehud Barak made repeated attempts to convince popular members of their parties, or retiring charismatic IDF generals, to run in local races -- with little success.

"The weakened parties cannot promise these candidates a victory, and they are afraid to lose," says Professor Giora Goldberg of Bar-Ilan University. "So increasingly, local candidates are not prominent national figures with high profiles."

With the weakening of the party organizations, and the lack of charismatic figures topping the tickets, turnout in local races has dropped significantly.

INTO the vacuum left by the large parties have come not only ambitious individuals, but smaller groups looking to get their feet in the door.

"With the demise of the two big parties and their 'shadow' candidates, we are seeing the rise of sectoral parties -- representing various religious interests, Sephardim, and Russian parties," says Hazan.

The classic example of a party that has built its power from the local level upwards is Shas. Though the party seemed to catapult out of nowhere onto the national stage in the late 1980s, the groundwork had been laid locally years earlier. And unlike the trends in the two large parties, the ties between Shas national leadership and municipalities remains tight -- hence the national leaders' historic preference for the interior portfolio. In several localities this year, Shas representatives are strong, and some are even within reach of top posts.

Looking to imitate the Shas success story are Yisrael Ba'Aliya and various other Russian immigrant parties.

Reacting to the strength of Shas and other religious parties, candidates from Labor, Meretz, and independent lists are using the fear of haredi domination to bring indifferent secular voters to the polls.

"Using anger or fear of exploitation by the haredi community is a method by which left-wing or liberal candidates are trying to raise the turnout of their potential supporters," says Diskin. "They are saying: 'don't forget to come and vote -- the religious are out there voting, how about you?'"

Hazan is skeptical, though, that the anti-haredi tactics will be effective. "On a national level, the Orthodox have been quiet lately -- the wintertime is generally when the budget battles occur and the anti-religious party sentiment peaks. And even when the sentiment is there, in secular circles, there are often feelings of resentment, and a lot of complaining, but this does not usually turn into a massive turnout at the polls."

The political scientists generally agree that there is one direct relationship between the municipal elections of the 1990s and the national scene.

As the direct election of mayors has become institutionalized, local politics is now increasingly about personalities rather than party loyalty -- and observers say that can indicate what can be expected on a national level if Israel continues with the relatively new phenomenon of directly electing the prime minister.

Some, like Diskin, view the decision to split the wing for the executive and the legislative branches of government -- on both a local and national level -- as a huge mistake.

"The people who lobbied for direct election of the prime minister argued all along that in the end, it would reduce the power of the smaller parties and the religious parties and would strengthen the large parties," says Diskin.

"Anyone who kept an eye on what was happening on a municipal level knew in advance that this system was going to ruin the two large parties. It ruined them locally, and now they are falling apart nationally. Yet, the leaders of the two parties, Barak and Netanyahu, continue to support the system for their own egocentric reasons."

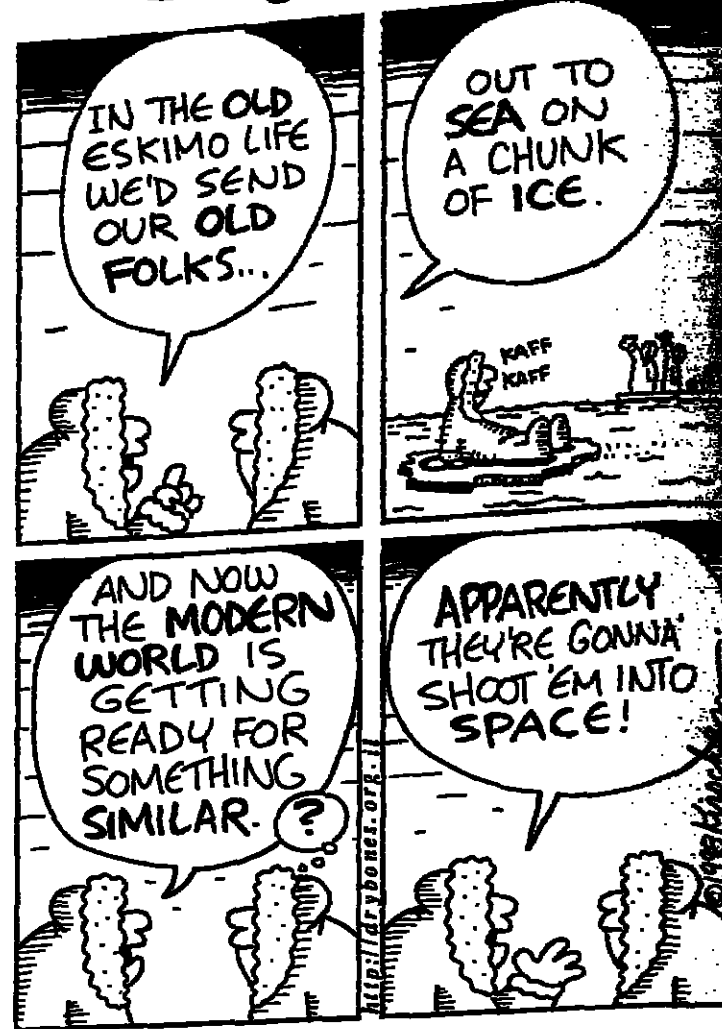
But others, like Goldberg of Bar-Ilan, disagree.

"I think it has been good for the municipalities that there is more power in the hands of the mayor," he says.

"True, there have been some problems with direct elections, but locally, when you compare it to the previous system, it is far better than the days where mayors were regularly voted out by the smaller parties. There is a consensus that it has created more stability and has been good for government on a local level, and eventually people will see it is also beneficial on a national level as well."

In Sunday's Jerusalem Post: The race in Tel Aviv.

Dry Bones



GRAPEVINE

By GREER FAY CASHMAN

Many well-known Arab figures, including journalist and diplomat Nasser Eddin Nashashubi, whose uncle Ragheb served as mayor of Jerusalem from 1920 to 1934, and legal eagle Zahi Khouri, were among the guests at the official opening of Founji, a new, triple-level kosher dairy restaurant and bar in the Jerusalem neighborhood of Talbiyah. Proprietors are second-generation restaurateur Avi Elkayam, whose father Asher Elkayam owns such well-established eateries as Chez Simon and David's Harp, and property manager Tawfiq Abu Rahma, who has no previous experience in the food business. The partners met over a year ago when Elkayam, owner of the popular Little Italy, sought to expand his restaurant interests by opening another facility next door in the David Building, which is owned by a prominent Bethlehem family now living in Guatemala. Abu Rahma manages all the David properties.

The cuisine at the opening did not reflect either partner's gastronomic traditions: sushi dominated the constant flow of platters. Neither did the guests leave empty-handed. In addition to the floral souvenirs distributed on such occasions, Havana cigars were also handed round. Some guests went home with quite a hefty supply.

THE atmosphere at Notre Dame was ecumenical and convivial when Apostolic Delegate Archbishop Pietro Sambi held a reception to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the papacy of Pope John Paul II in the presence of Archbishop Jean Louis Tauran, Vatican secretary of state. Guests filed along a long reception line shaking hands with high-ranking clergy from many countries. In the corridors and outside in the plaza Christians of various denominations mingled happily with Jews and Muslims -- in fact, everyone got along so well that it was difficult to believe this was the Middle East.

Spotted in the enormous crowd were Shmuel Hadas, Israel's former ambassador to the Vatican, Faisal Hussein, the senior Palestinian Authority official in Jerusalem, and Uri Mor, the Ministry for Religious Affairs' chief liaison, as well as ADL Israel director David Ross, Deputy Mayor David Cassouto and Sammy Tvet, the Foreign Ministry's chief of protocol.

AMID the tension surrounding the Wye Plantation Memorandum, American Jewish Congress director David Clayman and his wife, Rachel, organized a post-Wye cookout at their home in the capital. Guests, who included a liberal sprinkling of journalists and diplomats, speculated on the memo's pros and cons, the likelihood of new elections in Israel, and whether the Israelis attending the upcoming GA in Jerusalem will urge American delegates to make more noise about Jonathan Pollard.

Shmoozing with old friends and new acquaintances were former Israel Radio broadcaster Miriam Hirschlag and her husband, Jonathan Ferziger, who have just returned after three years abroad. Ferziger, former UPI bureau chief in Israel, was transferred to Hong Kong. Then, after UPI folded, he was snapped up by Bloomberg, which transferred him back to Israel -- about which he's not complaining. Also present following his return home from his first posting to Bombay was young Israeli diplomat Marco Serranetta, and, of course, Moshe Fuchs, who heads the North American desk at the Foreign Ministry. Among the

American diplomats were Jerry Anderson, head of the political section at the US embassy, Comp. Mayer, his counterpart at the Consulate, and Jerry Firestein, new deputy chief of mission at the US Consulate.

As usual, Rachel Clayman bartered enough hot dogs, hamburgers and poultry to feed an army.

WAITERS who abandoned their trays and lined up against the wall in the banquet hall of the Dan Pearl Hotel at the Hug Yovel International Fashion Show seemed more intent on feasting their eyes on the menswear, marketed here by Leopard, than on the female models showing Wolford stockings and body suits and couture lines by N'elie of Paris. The full house, which raised several thousand shekels for Herzog Hospital, included Pamela Lova, Jane Klissner, Gini Bachrach, Joan Fisher, Naomi Leibler, Liz Ginsburg, Lily Silver, Estelle Fink and Rose Fish, all of whom are devoted to numerous good causes.

RUNNING late on the campaign trail, Jerusalem mayor Ehud Olmert arrived for a parlor meeting at the palatial home of Dvora and Danny Rejwan just after 11 p.m. Most of the guests had been waiting around for an hour -- and they had to wait even longer while Olmert and two of the more controversial members on his election list, Rafi Peled and Haim Cohen, pressed palms and partook of refreshments. Peled and Cohen eventually left, leaving the field to Olmert, who spoke in such quiet, soothing tones that most of the guests started to yawn and some actually nodded off.

Olmert resisted pressure to commit himself in the event that he is reelected, saying that the only promise he had made was not to make any promises. He also evaded a question by his good friend, building contractor Kushi Barasashi -- will he be as devoted to Jerusalem if he becomes prime minister as he is in the capacity of mayor? -- and frustrated Batshava Kukla, who belongs to one of the wealthiest families in Jerusalem, by deferring discussion on any of her grievances until after the elections.

THEIR busy lives notwithstanding, public figures still seem to find the time to take courses for self-improvement and pleasure. But, unlike Likud MK Benny Begin, few end up writing a book about them. Begin took a Yad Ben-Zvi course called *In the Footsteps of the Bible* and completed his book, based on what he had learned, during the Knesset's summer recess. He is a frequent participant in Yad Ben-Zvi Courses. Other celebrities who've enrolled include Gen. (res.) Matan Vilna'i, Nava Barak, wife of Labor Party chief Ehud Barak, Hadassah Neeman, wife of the current Finance Minister, and Tamar Shohat, the wife of his predecessor.

POPULAR singer Yizhar Cohen donned a white jacket and chef's hat to take his place in the Tel Hotel kitchen together with the hotel's chef, Nir Abutbul, and Daniel Hotel Executive Chef Roni Zomer, who is also chairman of the Association of Tel Aviv Chefs. The assignment: To prepare a traditional Yemenite shankbone soup. Cohen earned kudos from the pros, who failed to pry the secret recipe from him. The soup was on the menu of a gala dinner representing the country's melting-pot gastronomy. The event, organized by the Israel Chefs Association, was held this week at the Tel Aviv Fairgrounds.

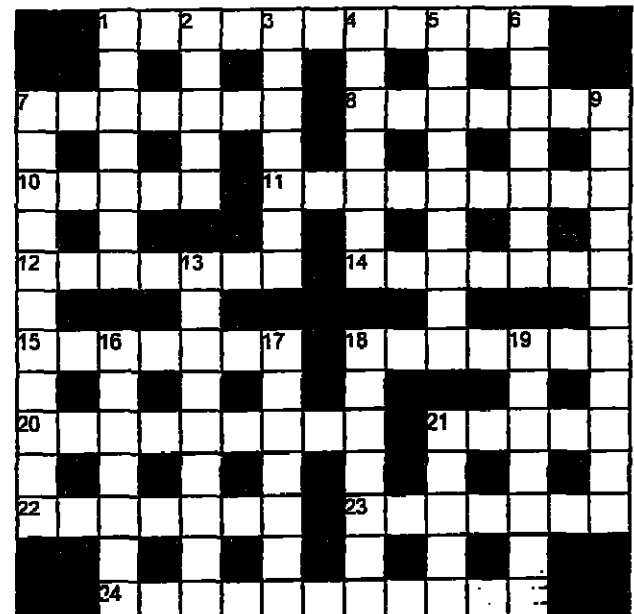
CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Major demo by Catholic congregation (4,7)
- 7 No rates charged by a politician (7)
- 8 Hazard the colliery fears (7)
- 10 A prison in ferment (5)
- 11 Midlands city favoured by Elizabeth I (9)
- 12 Bounty was a sizeable ship (7)
- 14 Businessmen giving players their cards (7)
- 15 Bring me back two game birds to get a cuddle (7)
- 18 Baseball player needs a jug (7)
- 20 Shopping before hitting the sack (7,2)
- 21 Sincerely endeavour to involve superior pupil (5)

DOWN

- 2 Traders ordered to display Soviet emblem (3,4)
- 3 One more article sent back to the woman (7)
- 4 Infuriatingly and demandingly intricate (11)
- 1 Man taken around northern cathedral (7)
- 2 Famous performer carrying one instrument (5)
- 3 A game the witless lose (7)



SOLUTIONS

YESTERDAY'S QUICK SOLUTION
ACROSS: 1 Penny, 4 Trail, 10 Uncooth, 11 Verdi, 12 Balis, 13 Meridian, 15 Cops, 17 Feast, 19 Souze, 22 Ohan, 25 Verbeus, 27 Belat, 29 Recur, 30 Beehive, 31 Berry, 32 Usher, DOWN: 2 Excel, 3 Nautics, 5 Rever, 6 Inroads, 7 Busby, 8 Trump, 9 Dirty, 14 Oona, 16 Eton, 18 Parache, 20 Owens, 21 Overt, 23 Sambi, 24 Saver, 26 Error, 28 Loire.

QUICK CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Place of worship (6)
- 7 More distant (7)
- 8 Lively (8)
- 9 Surrendered (5)
- 10 Stealing (5)
- 11 Jerusalem hill (4)
- 12 Greek "d" (5)
- 15 Cavalry sword (5)
- 16 Upright (5)
- 18 Horizontal bar (4)
- 20 Unlawful act (5)
- 21 Relieve (5)
- 22 Star-shaped (8)
- 23 Waste away (7)
- 24 Anticipate (6)

DOWN

- 1 Discipline (8)
- 2 Cosmos (8)
- 3 Guile (5)
- 4 Knave (3)
- 5 Goddess of wisdom (6)
- 6 Imperfection (6)
- 7 Practicality (11)
- 8 Cipher (4)
- 13 Go to law (8)
- 14 Devotee (8)
- 15 Pause (4)
- 17 Tell (6)
- 18 Polish city (6)
- 20 Sepals collectively (5)
- 22 Diffident (3)

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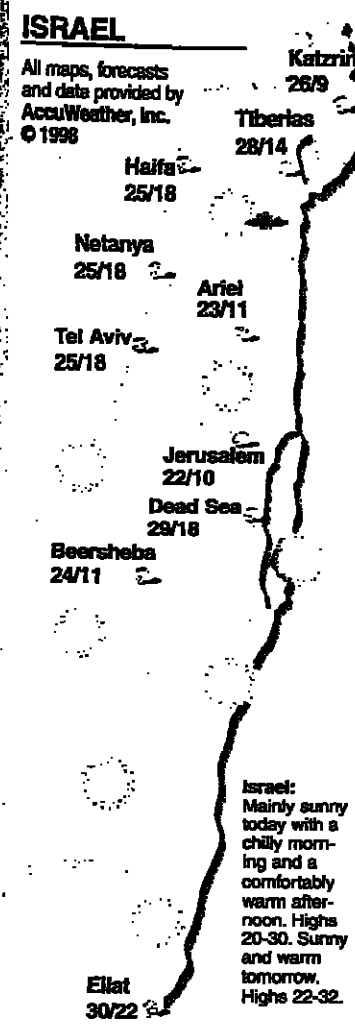
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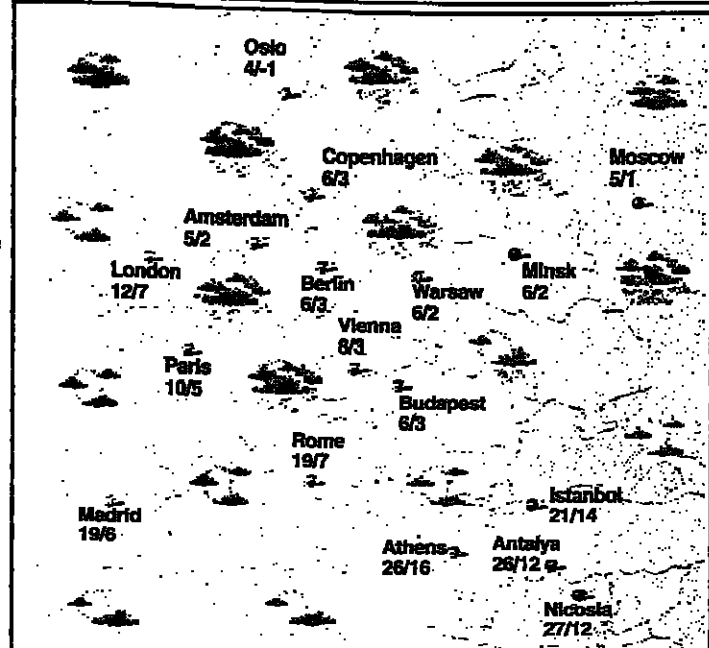
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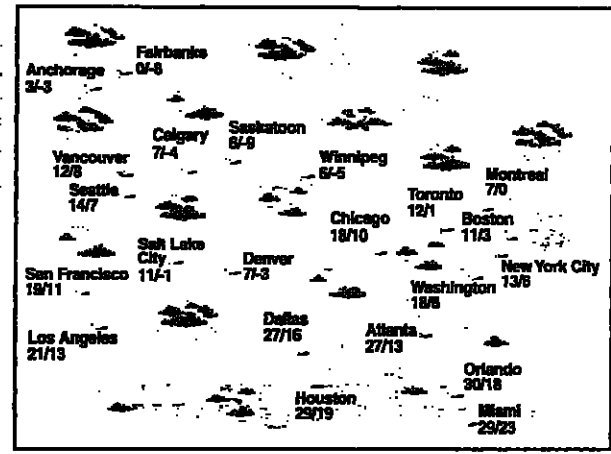
ISRAEL CITIES

City	Today	Low/High	Saturday	Low/High	Sunday	Low/High	Monday	Low/High
Ariel	23/7	11/22	25/7	13/25	27/7	15/27	27/7	13/25
Beersheba	24/7	11/22	26/7	13/25	28/7	15/27	28/7	14/21
Dead Sea	29/18	18/24	31/8	20/26	31/8	20/26	31/8	20/26
Eilat	30/22	22/32	32/8	24/34	32/8	24/34	32/8	24/34
Haifa	25/7	16/24	27/7	18/26	29/7	20/28	29/7	18/26
Jerusalem	22/11	10/20	24/7	12/22	26/7	14/24	26/7	12/22
Katzen	25/7	16/24	27/7	18/26	29/7	20/28	29/7	18/26
Netanya	25/7	16/24	27/7	18/26	29/7	20/28	29/7	18/26
Tel Aviv	25/7	16/24	27/7	18/26	29/7	20/28	29/7	18/26
Tiberias	25/7	16/24	27/7	18/26	29/7	20/28	29/7	18/26

INTERNATIONAL CITIES

City	Today	Low/High	Saturday	Low/High	Sunday	Low/High
Amsterdam	5/2	1/6	6/3	2/8	7/4	3/9
Antwerp	5/2	1/6	6/3	2/8	7/4	3/9
Brussels	5/2	1/6	6/3	2/8	7/4	3/9
Cairo	27/8	15/25	29/8	17/27	31/8	19/29
Frankfurt	12/3	7/13	14/3	9/15	16/3	11/17
Hong Kong	27/8	15/25	29/8	17/27	31/8	19/29
London	12/3	7/13	14/3	9/15	16/3	11/17
Los Angeles	21/7	13/23	23/7	15/25	25/7	17/27
Madrid	19/6	14/24	21/7	16/26	23/7	18/28
Mexico City	24/7	11/22	26/7	13/23	28/7	15/25
Montreal	7/4	3/9	9/4	5/11	11/4	7/13
Moscow	5/2	1/6	6/3	2/8	7/4	3/9
New York	13/5	8/13	15/5	10/16	17/5	12/18
Paris	10/5	5/11	12/5	7/13	14/5	9/15
Rio de Janeiro	27/8	15/25	29/8	17/27	31/8	19/29
Rome	19/6	14/24	21/7	16/26	23/7	18/28
Sydney	18/4	13/19	20/4	15/21	22/4	17/23
Tokyo	22/7	18/24	24/7	20/26	26/7	22/28
Toronto	12/3	7/13	14/3	9/15	16/3	11/17
Vienna	9/4	5/11	11/4	7/13	13/4	9/15
Warsaw	6/3	2/8	8/3	4/10	10/3	6/12
Washington	18/4	13/19	20/4	15/21	22/4	17/23
Zurich	4/3	0/6	6/3	2/8	8/3	4/10

NORTH AMERICA WEATHER TODAY



Upholding Beverlee's legacy

The death, last Friday, of Beverlee Black, director of our three funds, robbed us of a warm person whose talent at fund-raising was recognized not only by the givers but also by the recipients.

Beverlee took over the funds in 1985 and introduced many new ideas. Firstly, there was the very successful Pessah Handicrafts Fair; she had already begun arranging next year's event before her death. After the massive aliyah from the former Soviet Union began 10 years ago, followed by the Ethiopian aliyah of Operation Solomon, she started the Welcome Home Fund, which has helped hundreds of new immigrants and provided scholarships to nearly 200 students.

Just before her illness, she was intimately involved in the charity dinner being held on November 17 at the Bible Lands Museum to celebrate the Toy Fund's 50th anniversary.

Beverlee's warmth and humor will be sorely missed. Those of us who took over from her do so in the knowledge that her favorite

slogan "no one ever got poorer from giving to charity" was the essence of her life and we are humbled by her effort and dedication on behalf of the funds. We honor her memory by continuing her work, collecting more and helping those less fortunate members of our society.

Please rush your checks to: The Jerusalem Post Funds, P.O.B. 81, 91000 Jerusalem. We (Illie Feldman, Judy Aminoff and Debi Rubini) can be reached by telephone at (02) 537-6528 if you wish to make a donation via Visa or if you have any queries.

Donors living in the United States wishing to receive a tax deduction can send their donations to: Friends of The Jerusalem Post Funds, 270 Lafayette St., Suite 505, New York, NY 10012. Please designate in your letter to which fund you wish to donate and write your message very clearly.

FORSAKE ME NOT

NIS 300 Elana Sobel, J'im.

FUNDS

ILLIE FELDMAN

Anne Feldman, Esther Schreiber and Jack Schreiber - Susan Reiter, Haifa.
NIS 100 Anon.
NIS 54 in honor of Joan Kedem and her work for the 50th anniversary of the Jerusalem Post Toy Fund.
\$500 Louis C. & Cella K. Grossberg Foundation, Bethesda, MD.
NIS 180 In loving memory of Joseph and George Popkin - Marcia Sandler, Teaneck, NJ.
NIS 100 In honor of Mrs. Porush's 95th birthday - Anon. Anon., J'm.
NIS 72 Honoring the memory of Beverlee Black - Anon., J'm.
NIS 54 Honoring the memory of Zipporah Bahay - Louis C. & Cella K. Grossberg Foundation, Bethesda, MD.
\$100 To celebrate my daughter Julie's 35th birthday on October 18, and my recovery from recent surgery - Issy Gottlieb, London.
NIS 54 In memory of my parents Mena and George Popkin - Marcia Sandler, Teaneck, NJ.
NIS 88 In honor of Aunt Roses 88th birthday, 8/12 - Jackie and Jerry.
NIS 38 Rhoda Rothberg, Philadelphia, PA.
NIS 10 Edwin and Debbie Smith, Meriville, LA.

New Progress NIS 1,256 \$1,324
Total NIS 156,378 \$51,512

TOY FUND

NIS 180 In loving memory of Joseph and Anne Feldman, Esther Schreiber

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\$500 Louis C. & Cella K. Grossberg Foundation, Bethesda, MD.
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NIS 100 In honor of Mrs. Porush's 95th birthday - Anon. Anon., J'm.
NIS 72 Honoring the memory of Beverlee Black - Anon., J'm.
NIS 54 Honoring the memory of Zipporah Bahay - Louis C. & Cella K. Grossberg Foundation, Bethesda, MD.
\$100 To celebrate my daughter Julie's 35th birthday on October 18, and my recovery from recent surgery - Issy Gottlieb, London.
NIS 54 In memory of my parents Mena and George Popkin - Marcia Sandler, Teaneck, NJ.
NIS 88 In honor of Aunt Roses 88th birthday, 8/12 - Jackie and Jerry.
NIS 38 Rhoda Rothberg, Philadelphia, PA.
NIS 10 Edwin and Debbie Smith, Meriville, LA.

New Progress NIS 1,256 \$1,324
Total NIS 156,378 \$51,512

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\$500 Mr. and Mrs. H.W. Adams, Bluefield, W. VA. Louis C. & Cella K. Grossberg Foundation, Bethesda, MD.
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'We were fearful for his life'

83-year-old Joe DiMaggio fights pneumonia

NEW YORK (AP) — Joe DiMaggio will be hospitalized for three more weeks with pneumonia and a lung infection even though his lawyer said yesterday he had improved from earlier this month when "we were fearful for his life."

DiMaggio's lawyer and friend, Morris Engelberg, said he has been with him every day since the Hall of Famer was admitted to Memorial Regional Hospital in Hollywood, Florida on October 12.

DiMaggio had been in intensive care with severe breathing problems, and had his lungs drained at least twice, Engelberg said.

"Look, he will be 84 next month and he has pneumonia," he said. "It was very, very serious. We were fearful for his life."

Engelberg said he got the first sign in more than two weeks when he visited DiMaggio on Wednesday. "He was sitting in a chair watching the news on television when I walked in. And I don't mind telling you that I was

relieved because when I walked into his room in intensive care, and he wasn't there, I thought he had died. But they had moved him to another room, and there he was, watching television. I hugged him."

The hospital has a children's wing named for DiMaggio, who has been instrumental in raising funds for the unit.

Engelberg has been unyielding in barring access to DiMaggio, even blocking delivery of food from one of the slugger's favorite Italian restaurants.

A woman at the hospital switchboard during the weekend even denied DiMaggio was a patient there.

He was honored at Yankee Stadium on the final day of the season, and Yankees owner George Steinbrenner insisted that DiMaggio throw out the ceremonial first ball at the World Series opener in New York. But DiMaggio was hospitalized five days before the game, and Cubs slugger Sammy Sosa did the honors instead.

If it's Wednesday, it must be the Golden League

GRANADA (Reuters) — Athletics chiefs have revamped their fixture list for next season in a bid to make Wednesday nights a focal point for top-class track and field.

Next year's Golden League meetings, the most lucrative series in the sport, will take place on a Wednesday, the International Amateur Athletic Federation said after its world calendar conference yesterday.

Earlier this year, IAAF chief Primo Nebiolo said he hoped to introduce the midweek fixtures in a bid to improve television coverage of the sport — following the example of Monday night Football in the US.

The six venues for the League, which pays out a jackpot of \$1 million dollars to athletes who win their events at all the meetings, have remained the same as last year — Oslo, Rome, Monaco, Zurich, Brussels and Berlin.

The IAAF said that only athletes who competed in all the meetings, the grand prix final and, if selected, the 1999 world championships in Seville would be eligible for a shot at the jackpot.

Schumacher looks to close gap

SUZUKA (Reuters) — Michael Schumacher is tired of talking about Sunday's Japanese Grand Prix Formula One world title showdown in Suzuka. He cannot wait to start driving.

The German sat stony-faced through a pre-race news conference yesterday and said: "I think the time has come to stop all the questions and talking and just get on with racing the cars now."

Championship leader Mika Hakkinen, a crucial four points ahead of the Ferrari driver, looked much more relaxed as he sat near Schumacher and talked positively about McLaren's satisfactory preparations.

"We did quite a lot of testing in Magny-Cours and in Barcelona, but not too much and I am quite happy about that," said the Finn. "Our intention this weekend is to treat it like a normal race, but obviously it is quite interesting for me."

"I, personally, of course, am experiencing something different to anything before in my career in Formula One. It is challenging and not easy. But none of this year's races have been easy. It is the most important race this year, but all the others were extremely important too and so I am just looking forward to it."

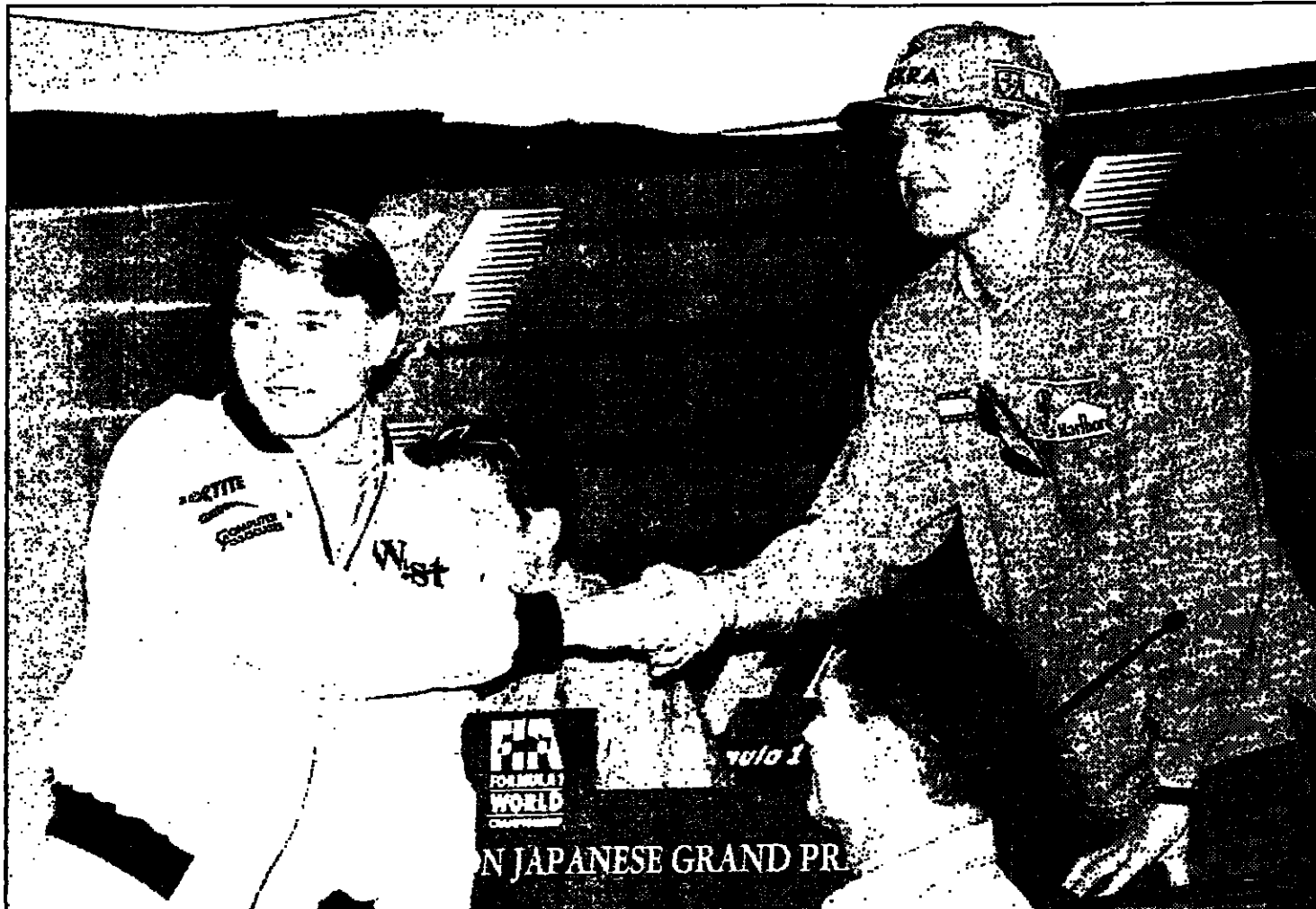
Schumacher and Hakkinen were accompanied by teammates Eddie Irvine and David Coulthard respectively.

All four said they were hoping for, and expect, a clean race with no repetition of last year's title showdown in Jerez, Spain where Schumacher tried to drive Jacques Villeneuve off the track.

Schumacher said he expected to be more competitive than he and Ferrari had been at the Luxembourg Grand Prix at the Nuerburging, Germany, five weeks ago, where he finished second to Hakkinen.

He said: "Well, it is a different circuit here. Our choice of tyres was different in the Nuerburging and it will be different here so that can change the picture quite dramatically."

"It is clearly my target to win and I will do all I can to achieve that. Nothing more, nothing less."



FRIENDLY FOES — Finland's Mika Hakkinen (l) and Germany's Michael Schumacher shake hands at a news conference before Sunday's running of the season-ending Japanese Grand Prix in Suzuka.

A race win. Yes, that's it. Certainly, I expect the same from Eddie as before during this year and during testing. It is not too much to ask and he can do it himself. I know that. He could win this race."

Irvine, who made his Formula One debut at Suzuka and drove superbly last year before allowing Schumacher through to win, said: "It's my favorite circuit. It has every type of corner going. It has the slowest in F1 and it has the fastest and everything in between."

"It's got ups and downs and lefts and rights. I enjoy it and I always go well here. If anyone can do the job here, it is me, so from that standpoint we are in a good position."

"As to the race, it all depends where we qualify and where the McLaren's qualify. We will have a much clearer idea on Saturday night, but it can all change again in the first corner."

We were lucky last year in the way it worked out and I popped round the back, but it could be out of our hands this time. Last time, it was slow. This time, if they are

quick there is not much we can do." Schumacher said his experience of similar "showdown" situations in the past was not an advantage. "We will see on Sunday. It is time to prove things now and stop talking."

Asked about drawing a line between acceptable tactical driving and non-acceptable tactics, Coulthard replied: "It's very difficult to give an answer to this question because every incident is different and everyone has a different opinion to each incident."

As for running someone off the

road, Coulthard claims he never did so in the past and won't do so now for someone else, even for Mika. "I agree. If Mika is trying to overtake me, he has to be careful more than anyone else. I can take a bit more of a chance. It is the same with Michael and DC — the guy who is fighting for the championship has more to lose."

"I don't want to take Mika off to help Michael to win the championship. I wouldn't want anyone to do that to me and that's the way you have got to judge it."

Holmstrom, Lidstrom power Red Wings past Florida

SUNRISE, Fla. (AP) — Tomas Holmstrom scored two power-play goals and Niklas Lidstrom had a goal and two assists as the Detroit Red Wings beat the Florida Panthers 7-2 Wednesday night.

Sergei Fedorov, Darren McCarty, Steve Yzerman and Kirk Maltby also scored as the Red Wings (6-2-0) won for the second time in three games since Scotty Bowman returned as coach.

Bowman, the NHL's winningest coach with 1,059 victories, missed the season's first five games as he recuperated from offseason angioplasty and surgery to replace his left knee.

The Red Wings' seven goals were a season high and the most given up by the Panthers since a 7-3 loss to Philadelphia last April 16, their final game at Miami Arena.

Radek Dvorak and Jaroslav Spacek scored for Florida (2-2-3), which had its second straight poor outing at home. The Panthers lost 5-0 to Vancouver last Friday.

Hurricanes 2, Blackhawks 0 Sami Kapanen returned from a knee injury to score in his fourth straight game and Arurs Irbe got his 14th career shutout as Carolina won at home.

Kapanen, who sat out Sunday's 3-2 home loss against Los Angeles with a bruised knee, scored the game-winner with 5:48 left in the second period from Ron Francis, who had knocked Christian Laflamme off the puck behind Chicago goaltender Mark Fitzpatrick.

Francis scored an empty-net goal with 19:9 seconds left.

Bruins 9, Canadiens 2 Boston scored three times on the power play after defenseman Dave Manson was ejected for elbowing Per-Johan Axelsson in the head in a road win.

Peter Ferraro, Dmitri Khristich and Grant Ledyard scored power-play goals in a 51-second span of the second period after Manson was tossed for slamming Axelsson's head into the glass.



HEAD FIRST — Kings center Ian Laperriere dives to block a shot by Devils winger Brian Rolston. Los Angeles blanked New Jersey, 4-0 on Wednesday.

behind the Montreal net.

The Bruins had already taken a 3-0 lead in the first period on goals from Ted Donato, Chris Taylor and Sergei Samsonov.

Kings 4, Devils 0 Stephane Fiset and Manny Legace combined to stop 40 shots and Los Angeles capitalized on two errors by Devils defenseman Sheldon Souray to win on the road.

Craig Johnson scored on a 2-on-1 break in the first period and defenseman Rob Blake scored a second goal.

Boston 3-0-0 Montreal 0-0-2 First Period—1, Boston, Donato 1 (Thornhill, Ferraro), 1:36. 2, Boston, Taylor 1 (Wassilios, Dillab, 10:00. 3, Boston, Samsonov 1 (Krichelski), 19:20. Second Period—4, Boston, Ferraro 3 (Thornhill, Ledyard), 8:05 (pp). 5, Boston, Krichelski 3 (Bourque, Fiset), 8:34 (pp). 6, Boston, Ledyard 1 (Swaney), 10:00 (pp). Third Period—7, Boston, Ferraro 4 (Donato), 1:41. 8, Montreal, Fiset 1 (Giroux), 8:52. 9, Boston, Allison 2 (Bourque, Van Impe), 12:51 (pp). 10, 11, Montreal, Higgins 1, 16:13. Shots on goal—Boston 13-9-24. Montreal 12-11-25. Goals—Boston, Dabo, Montreal, Theodore, Theriault. A-20,372.

Chicago 0-0-0 Carolina 0-1-2 First Period—None. Second Period—1, Carolina, Kapanen 4 (Francis), 14:12. Third Period—2, Carolina, Francis 2 (Kapanen, Roberts), 19:40 (en). Shots on goal—Chicago 4-7-10-21. Carolina 0-0-2-25. Goals—Chicago, Fitzpatrick, Carolina, Iba. A-5,002.

Los Angeles 11-2-4 New Jersey 0-0-0 First Period—1, Los Angeles, C.Johnson 1 (Narator), 1:45. Second Period—2, Los Angeles, Blake 2, 11:50 (en). Third Period—3, Los Angeles, Duchesne 1 (Pomuski, Moyer), 8:19 (pp). 4, Los Angeles, Taylor 1 (Pomuski), 13:48. Shots on goal—Los Angeles 7-6-18. New Jersey 17-10-34-40. Goals—Los Angeles, Fiset, Legace, New Jersey, Brodeur. A-15,005.

short-handed goal in the second by taking advantage of Souray's mistakes.

Defenseman Steve Duchesne and Vladimir Tsyplakov took the third period as the Kings closed out a five-game road trip with a 2-2-1 record.

Penguins 5, Flames 2 Stu Barnes had two of Pittsburgh's five power-play goals, lifting his team to an away win.

Brad Werenka, Rob Brown and German Titov also scored for the Penguins (4-2-1), who won for the

second time in a row, improving their road record to 4-1.

Jaromir Jagr had three assists for the Penguins, who took a 3-2 lead after two periods thanks to the Flames' penchant for bad penalties. The Penguins, who entered the game with the fourth-ranked power play in the league, went 5-for-8 with the man advantage.

Oilers 8, Capitals 2 Boris Mironov and Bill Guerin scored two goals apiece, leading Edmonton won at home in a game marred by an injury to Oilers star

(Guerin, Mironov), 1:48. 6, Edmonton, Hamrik 1 (Lundgren, Guerin), 18:46. Third Period—7, Edmonton, Guerin 7 (B.Mironov, Essensa), 6:03 (pp). 8, Washington, Jureau 3 (Coles, Thibault), 11:59 (en). 9, Edmonton, B.Mironov 3 (Mironov), 12:01. 10, Edmonton, Guerin 8 (Mironov), 17:41 (pp). Shots on goal—Washington 13-4-24. Edmonton 11-12-10-33. Goals—Washington, Kolby, Tabacco, Edmonton, Essensa. A-14,290.

Tampa Bay 0-2-3 Anaheim 2-2-1 First Period—1, Anaheim, Kariya 4 (Salei, Ruzhicki), 16:14 (pp). 2, Anaheim, Sandstrom 2 (Mironov, Guerin), 18:11. Second Period—3, Tampa Bay, Rorberg 2 (Langkow, Clark), 2:12 (pp). 4, Anaheim, Gilmour 1 (Salei, Sandstrom), 11:53. 5, Tampa Bay, Cross 1 (Yasutake, Langkow), 14:36. 6, Anaheim, Gilmour 2 (Sandstrom, Davidson), 15:24. Third Period—5, Tampa Bay, Clark 8 (Selvanov, 19:50) (pp). 6, Anaheim, Selanne 4 (Rucinski, 19:55) (en). Shots on goal—Tampa Bay 14-12-14-45. Anaheim 14-17-31.

Phoenix 0-1-3 San Jose 11-0-2 First Period—1, San Jose, Houlder 2 (Frisen, Nicholls), 11:56 (pp). Second Period—2, Phoenix, Tverdokh 4 (Sandstrom, Vionen), 3:55. 3, San Jose, Glatzel 2 (Rucinski, Mironov), 16:56. Third Period—4, Phoenix, Tverdokh 3 (Lumme, Rorberg), 2:38. 5, Phoenix, Tverdokh 5 (Lumme, Rorberg), 14:13. Shots on goal—Phoenix 6-11-23. San Jose 19-8-26. Goals—Phoenix, Khudabul, San Jose, Shields. A-15,512.

Doug Weight. Weight assisted on Mironov's goal in the first period that helped the Oilers get off to an early lead.

EASTERN CONFERENCE						
Atlantic Division						
	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Philadelphia	5	1	2	12	20	11
Pittsburgh	4	2	1	9	21	20
N.Y. Islanders	4	4	0	8	16	18
N.Y. Rangers	3	4	3	7	15	23
New Jersey	3	4	0	6	12	17
Northeast Division						
	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Toronto	5	2	1	11	26	21
Boston	4	4	1	9	24	16
Montreal	3	4	1	7	19	23
Ottawa	3	3	0	6	17	16
Buffalo	2	3	2	6	14	15
Southeast Division						
	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Carolina	3	2	3	9	19	15
Florida	3	3	2	8	15	18
Washington	3	3	1	7	22	28
Tampa Bay	3	5	1	7	22	18
Florida	2	2	3	7	17	13

WESTERN CONFERENCE						
Central Division						
	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Detroit	6	2	0	12	28	14
Chicago	4	3	1	9	19	21
St. Louis	3	3	1	7	18	18
Kansas City	2	5	1	5	20	26
Northwest Division						
	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Edmonton	4	4	0	8	29	21
Vancouver	4	4	0	8	23	19
Calgary	2	5	1	5	21	30
Colorado	1	5	1	3	17	29
Pacific Division						
	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Dallas	5	1	1	11	19	11
Los Angeles	4	3	2	10	21	18
Phoenix	4	2	1	9	21	14
Anaheim	3	3	1	7	16	14
San Jose	0	5	2	2	12	22

Haifa expecting a stroll in Jaffa

By ORI LEWIS

National League leaders Hapoel Haifa look as if they should have no trouble holding onto top spot in the soccer standings come tomorrow night.

The reds travel to bottom club Maccabi Jaffa who have yet to notch a point in the league. Haifa are looking like a well-organized unit and have probably the most creative player in the country in Giovanni Rosso in their ranks to spearhead their attacks. Add to that the firepower of Ofer Talker, Lion Bassis and the experience of Ran Ben-Shimon, and Jaffa look totally outclassed.

Jaffa appointed Moshe Onana as their new coach in midweek. He took over from Boaz Sulami as the club's third coach this season. It is hard to see how Onana can rescue the side, which is the poorest in the league and looks like having no chance of keeping its place with the 14 clubs who will remain in the National League next season.

Betar Jerusalem, who have themselves suffered no little turmoil since the start of the season, and whose financial future is still uncertain after the delay of the Lauder takeover, will play at Maccabi Herzliya in tomorrow's televised match (Channel 2, 17:45).

Betar have still not been able to come up with the guarantees to secure the services of striker Nir Silvia and he has yet to play a match this season. The defending

champions have lost their last two league fixtures and will need a serious morale-boost to get back on track. Coach Dror Kashtan had threatened to make sweeping changes in his defense, but apparently has no ammunition (extra players) to carry his threat through. Silvia is still unlikely to play and Eli Ohana and Assi Domb are injured.

This weekend's National League fixtures (all matches kick off tomorrow at 15:00 unless stated): Ironi Rishon v. Bnei Yehuda; Maccabi Haifa v. Maccabi Petah Tikva, Kiryat Eliezer 18:00; Hapoel Jerusalem v. Ironi Ashdod, Teddy Stadium 15:30; Hapoel Tel Aviv v. Hapoel Kfar Sava, Herzliya today 15:00; Zafirim Holon v. Maccabi Tel Aviv; Maccabi Herzliya v. Betar Jerusalem 17:50; Maccabi Jaffa v. Hapoel Haifa, Gaon Stadium; Hapoel Petah Tikva v. Hapoel Beit She'an 17:00.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hapoel Haifa	4	5	1	0	10	14
Bay Patah Tikva	6	5	0	1	12	4
Maccabi Petah Tikva	3	2	1	15	6	11
Zafirim Holon	6	3	1	2	10	10
Betar Jerusalem	6	3	1	2	12	9
Hapoel Kfar Sava	6	3	1	2	11	10
Hapoel Tel Aviv	6	3	1	2	4	10
Bay Jerusalem	6	3	0	3	11	9
Maccabi Haifa	6	3	0	3	7	9
Maccabi Jaffa	5	2	1	2	11	7
Ironi Rishon	4	1	3	2	7	6
Bnei Yehuda	6	1	2	3	9	5
Ironi Ashdod	5	1	2	8	11	5
Maccabi Tel Aviv	6	1	2	3	10	5
Bay Beit She'an	6	1	4	4	15	4
Maccabi Jaffa	6	0	6	2	18	0

Johnson files for free agency; Yankees show interest in Belle

NEW YORK (AP) — Randy Johnson, perhaps baseball's most explosive pitcher, is now on the free-agent market. And Albert Belle, explosive because of both his bat and his temper, is already attracting attention.

Both the New York Yankees and Mets said Wednesday they have contacted Belle's agent, and other are thought to be interested, too.

It was unclear if the Yankees' interest in the outfielder is genuine, or if they were just sending a message to Bernie Williams, who is unsure whether he'll re-sign with the World Series champions.

Yankees owner George Steinbrenner said he isn't bothered by Belle's tempestuous past.

"Nobody's history scares me," Steinbrenner said. "We have a discipline in the organization that has proven itself." Belle generally prefers to avoid reporters and would have trouble doing that in the Yankees clubhouse, where dozens of writers and cameramen

spend hours each day. Joe Torre's team was been a model of tranquility this year, and Belle doesn't appear to be a good fit.

"Who comes from deeper problems than Darryl and Doc?" Steinbrenner said, referring to Darryl Strawberry and Dwight Gooden. "Yet they accepted the discipline and accepted the direction."

Belle hit .328 with 49 homers and 152 RBIs last season. He agreed to a \$55 million, five-year contract with the Chicago White Sox in November 1996, but has a unique clause in his deal that allowed him to become a free agent Tuesday and also gave him the option through November 25 of returning to his White Sox contract.

Arizona GM Joe Garagiola Jr. said he intends to have Williams in for a visit next month. Diamondbacks manager Buck Showalter was Williams' manager in New York from 1992-95.

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